

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE SPHINX.

SIDNEY MALREWARD and Frank Mainwaring were at Christ Church together, but they had not seen each other for several years until they met at Cairo this spring. Malreward had entered political life, and sat for three years in Parliament, but lost his seat on the accession of the Tories to power in 1874. Immediately after his defeat he went abroad. His friends and enemies (and of the last he had more than he deserved) were periodically reminded of his existence by letters in newspapers and articles in reviews full of denunciations of ministers and consular agents, dated sometimes from Peking, and at other times from Pernambuco, now from the Fiji Islands, and again from the Bluff of Yokohama. When in the House Malreward had sat on the Ministerialist benches, but he had always been considered a free lance, and when the slender thread which tied him to a party was snapped, he delighted in nothing so much as in corrosive epigrams and acidulated epithets, attacks on the insincerity of the Cabinet, and exposures of the blunders of the Opposition. He was often right, but occasional thrusts, however deftly inflicted, do not give a man that character for solidity of judgment which is the only passport to permanent reputation in England. His treatment of those who differed from him was contemptuous, and his conciliatory manner had been neatly described as never going beyond "a repellent affability."

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Thus, when he entered the House at five-and-twenty, he had been called brilliant and promising; and when he returned to England at five-and-thirty he was pronounced clever and impracticable. The harder features of his character became more prominent every day, and he was on the verge of becoming a club-house Apemantus when he made a friendship which transfigured his life. In a fit of weariness he went to Palestine. There, as he was wandering with a sneer on his lip from holy place to holy place, he met Colonel Bayard. From a conversation with him at the foot of Mount Carmel Malreward dated the beginning of a new life. Old things were forgotten; favourite doctrines and phrases consigned to the limbo of forgetfulness. New interests were awakened, and he began to approach the real question, viz., the duties men and nations owe to their neighbours, in a new spirit. After a while, following Bayard's advice, he went to London and worked as he had never worked before. He devoted himself to charitable and social institutions, and strove not to re-organise, but to re-animate, them. After two years his health broke down, and the doctors prescribed change and rest. He found an old friend named Eldred Waverton going to Egypt, and this decided his destination. Two days after they arrived at Cairo they met Mainwaring, who had been at college

with both of them, and who had come out to add another to the already long list of books on the economical and financial condition of Egypt. His views were those of a large number of Englishmen. He hated sentimental statesmanship, and believed that every question resolved itself at last into a sum in arithmetic. Before he and his old friend had been an hour together he felt that he was altered in many ways. Malreward referred to principles of action and motives of national conduct that never entered into his (Frank Mainwaring's) head as operative on either individual or senate. The weight attached to conscience and the ignoring of selfishness as a motive seemed to show that Malreward had gone over to the philosophic Radicals, whose names were abominable to Mainwaring; but a few minutes after this suspicion had dawned on his mind, Malreward lashed out so savagely on the speech of a leading Radical statesman that Mainwaring was puzzled. However, it is not easy to talk politics in Cairo when we are there for the first time. There are so many colours, such harmonies and contrasts, such flushes of bright hues and varieties of intertwining forms all around one; and then, above all, there is such a vivid movement of life in street and bazaar, down the steps of tall, cool mosques, and around the twisted pillars of many-arched fountains, that your eyes are too actively employed for unruly tongues to jangle.

It happened, then, that the familiar English themes were only referred to once during the first three days of their stay, and the friends saw and enjoyed to the full. In Malreward's travelling days he would have made it a point of duty not to go to see the Pyramids or the Sphinx, which he considered monuments of pride, cruelty, and folly. His opinions, however, about the relative proportion of things *in rerum naturâ*, and of himself in particular, were changing. He realised that he could not afford to send an-

cient history to Coventry. He spent hours in the museum. He pondered in the darkness of Coptic churches and in the glare of the thronged El Azhar, and when he spoke it was as one who had for a long time seen men "as trees walking," but who now had brought the two lines of his intellectual life into contact. All that experience of foreign travel and observation, which had supplied him with statistics whereupon to base cynical criticisms on humankind, was henceforth to be so much fuel wherewithal to feed the flame of a bright and active conscience. And conscience with Malreward was not as it too often is—a whip kept in an oratory for private flagellation: it was a lighthouse that he was responsible for, and on the brightness and steadiness of its lamp the fate of millions depended. The caustic rhetoric that had spent itself in the House in proving the tergiversation of ministers and the apathy of the Opposition was employed in finding fault with the past. Henceforward there was hope for the world. A new departure had been taken. A new era was about to dawn. What it was, Mainwaring was for some time at a loss to understand, until after seeing the sun set from the summit of the Great Pyramid, and enjoying a modest dinner picnic fashion at its base, the three reclined watching the full moon, and letting the soft sand drop in powdery streams through lazy fingers beneath the shadow of the Sphinx.

The desert stretched, a bright expanse, under the shining moon. The Sphinx, looking more human than it ever looks by day, rose like a great rocky island out of the sea of sand. Behind towered the vast rampart of the oldest of the Pyramids with a slight flush of pale red suffusing and softening its rough face. The Pyramid of Chephren was in shadow.

"The sentiment that overpowers every other with me," said Malreward, "as I look at the Sphinx is one of compassion. There is something inexpressibly sad in the loneliness of

this creature. Here in the desert, surviving all who understood its purpose, all who revered its power, it remains 'for the people's pity and wonder.' If it could open those closed lips and tell us what it told the generation that created and adored it, would it have anything to say to which we should care to listen?"

"The Arabs call the Sphinx '*Abu'l hol*,' 'The Father of Terror,' and the name is fitly chosen. For from its age, from its size, from its strength, it seems suited to be the parent of all the progeny of demons that through the peopled centuries have cowed hearts, and crushed wills, and usurped the sceptre of God. I hate the thing with its calm face and bestial body," said Mainwaring with a passion he rarely showed in his voice.

"It is a quotation beloved by tourists," said Waverton, "but I cannot help, whenever I come here, recalling the short chapter about the Sphinx in *Eothen*. You remember—'Upon ancient dynasties of Ethiopian and Egyptian kings, upon Greek and Roman, upon Arab and Ottoman conquerors, upon Napoleon dreaming of an eastern empire, upon battle and pestilence, upon the ceaseless misery of the Egyptian race, upon keen-eyed travellers, Herodotus yesterday and Warburton to-day—upon all and more this unworldly Sphinx has watched, and watched like a providence with the same earnest eyes, and the same sad tranquil mien. And we, we shall die, and Islam will wither away, and the Englishman, straining far over to hold his loved India, will plant a firm foot on the banks of the Nile, and sit in the seats of the faithful, and still that sleepless rock will lie watching and watching the works of the new busy race with those same sad earnest eyes, and the same tranquil mien everlasting.'"

"Yes," said Mainwaring, "war and tyranny. Conquerors crushing Egypt in their grasp and using it as a foothold whence they may stride on to crush yet more distant lands. For my

part I feel the necessity of such things, yet wish that they were not needed. But I suppose they are the ugly consequences of that law which declares that the civilisation of the West must have its turn and dominate the East."

"Surely," replied Waverton, whose opinions and language were coloured by those of Malreward, "it is time we had outlived the idea that the word civilisation is a monopoly of Europe and America, and indeed (for that is what we mean in our hearts) peculiar to the nineteenth century. Am I to be asked to believe that the civilisation of Egypt dates from Napoleon I. and goes no further back? Were the architects who built magnificent Thebes savages, and the soldiers who played *écarté* amidst its ruins, and stuck up a placard inscribed 'To Paris' on its most stately pylon, civilised men?"

"No one would go so far as that now," said Malreward. "But I should like to sift that statement of yours, Mainwaring. When you say that the civilisation of the West must dominate the East, do you mean that the Western nations must conquer the East as the French have conquered Algiers, the Spaniards Cuba, and we ourselves India?"

"I believe there is no evading that somewhat stern interpretation of my words," replied Mainwaring reluctantly.

"That was really my conviction," returned Malreward, "all the time that I was supposed to be making laws for my unhappy country. In fact I repeated my political belief as the chivalrous Poles said their *credo* in church, with my sword drawn in my hand and my face turned to the east."

"And have you changed your opinion?" asked Mainwaring.

"So completely that every structure of argument built on those lines seems frail and foolish beyond description," said Malreward emphatically.

"Tell me, and I shall perhaps get an explanation of many changes that

have been puzzling me of late in my old friend," said Mainwaring.

"Since you desire it," returned Malreward, "and the time and place are germane to such speculations, I will tell you how after long consideration of these matters I was helped to find a definition which gave me a glimpse of light. But I never dreamed that any one would attempt to carry my theory into practice until in this year of grace 1883, and in this country of riddles I seem to espy a kind of hope."

Mainwaring and Waverton expressed surprise, and the former pressed for a full explanation with a promise not to interrupt unless under special provocation.

There was a pause of at least a minute before Malreward complied with the invitation and addressed himself to reply to the objectors.

"Surely this ever-recurring question of the relations of the Western peoples to the Eastern remains in the unsatisfactory state in which we find it to-day because we have never taken the trouble to get a definition of civilisation. There are two views diametrically opposed to each other. One party says, 'Leave nations, distinguished from us by race and religion, and separated from us by leagues of land and sea, alone. Why should we force ourselves and our institutions on Zulus and Egyptians, on Chinese and Japanese? Why not leave them unvisited by the missionary, and his companion the inevitable gun-boat? If they are torn by wars, let them alone to stew in their own juice. If they are our neighbours, and jeopardise our interests, and the cry of *proximus ardet* is raised, let us limit our interference sternly and distinctly to the protection of those imperilled interests, and when these are secured let us withdraw with all speed.' Another party begins by assuming that the Western man is undoubtedly in the position of superiority, and has a mission, in the most imperious sense of that widely-used word, to teach the

Eastern man all the lore his inquiring spirit and varied experience have garnered through centuries of activity, and above all, to begin by obliging him to make a clean sweep of all practices and prejudices, creeds and customs, which stand in the way of the process of de-Orientalisation. If the Asiatic or the African wears flowing robes, restrain his limbs in a tight surtout; if he writes from right to left, make him write from left to right; if he travels on a camel, make him travel in a train; if he drinks water, teach him to drink wine; if he eats with his fingers, compel him to eat with a fork. Have I stated the case fairly or not? Grant that I have, for the sake of argument for a moment, and rout me in detail afterwards."

Mainwaring and Waverton assented, but with rights reserved.

"Well, then," continued Malreward, "my main point is this. That the Western man does this too often in a masterful spirit, without sympathy and without examination, and that in the process he involves himself in countless contradictions and inconsistencies, as well as in costly and sanguinary wars. And then, that having a wakeful and sensitive conscience, though its prickings are felt more commonly after an injustice has been done than when he is preparing to commit it, he is ill at ease with himself, and lets the Oriental discover, when he has thoroughly unfitted him for the country in which God has put him, that he is half afraid he has made a mistake after all——"

"This is not so clear," interrupted Mainwaring. "The fatal fluency with which my honourable friend was twitted in a certain debate at the Union has assuredly led him astray."

"No," said Malreward. "It is the point I am most anxious to bring out. I do not know that I should quarrel with masterful reorganisation if it were consistently carried out, and if we believed in it ourselves. But ever

and anon we let the Oriental see that we are not quite certain we have been on the right tack, and that we are by no means sure that the medicine we have been administering is the proper prescription for the patient. For the sake of antithesis and precision you employed the words Western man and Eastern man, and that use of the singular has led you into a fallacy. You may personify the West for rhetorical purposes, but you do not thereby make it an individual. The Government of England, to narrow the issue, resolves to annex and civilise according to its view of that word an Indian state. When the annexation and civilisation are accomplished, evils are found to exist in the state, as it was perfectly fair to expect they would continue to do for some time. Then a section of the English people cry out that we have done the Hindoos no good, but the best-informed portion of the English people probably know that a great many practical benefits have been conferred on the natives."

"There is truth in what you say," replied Mainwaring. "Your arguments move me, however, but do not remove me. I grant that it is impossible to expect all Englishmen to think alike on any question, much less on one of foreign policy."

Malreward saw his way to making his favourite point.

"But I maintain that if we had a definition of civilisation to fall back upon and appeal to, there would not be such a wide divergence of opinion on our duties to eastern and other non-European peoples as there is at present. We are now most of us, I fear, content to regard civilisation as a convenient phrase covering all that world of materialistic appliance and scientific discovery which the nineteenth century has developed in Europe and America. This system, with its vast apparatus for subduing the earth, we desire to see set up in all lands. The phrase 'March of civilisation' is not quite so fashionable as it once was,

but it is still heard occasionally and it represents a progress like that of the mythic Bacchus over India, only that instead of blushing vineyards and fountains running wine, the modern god would leave behind him stacks of smoking chimneys and streams black with the refuse of chemical manufactories."

"I fancy," said Mainwaring, "that Waverton and I are prepared to agree in the main with what you say, though we might wish it said in less tropical language. However, we will look over that if you give us a definition of your own. Let us see you try your hand at building a house if only to give us the neighbourly pleasure of proving that your edifice is not a whit more stable than those you have demolished."

"Agreed," said Malreward. "I will try a definition of the civilised man then. He is the man who makes the most of the powers God has given him, and the world God has put him in. The man who does this has a right to teach his brother who does not do it. He does not merely go and compel him to make a railway or a canal, or to lay a line of telegraphic wires on pain of having his country taken from him. He requires improvements and reforms of all kinds, beginning with the reform of the man himself."

"Again you are speaking of a nation as if it were a unit, which if you persist in doing, we shall have fresh confusion," said Mainwaring.

Malreward answered as if he had expected the objection.

"I did it on purpose to bring out the fact that the individual must be first reformed, made honest, self-reliant, obedient, punctual, truth-telling. In a word, must be taught to make the most of himself before you can expect him to make the most of the place in which he is put. Mr. Gladstone, in his much-abused and little-read volume on Church and State, says:—'The State and the Church are both of them moral agencies. But the State aims at character

through conduct, the Church at conduct through character.' You admit that these are the two powers which have set about the task of reforming the world. I say a nation with an instructed conscience which has enabled it to recognise its obligations to its people and to give them intelligent teaching, strict laws, and free institutions, is bound also, on the principle of *noblesse oblige*, to try and induce a nation long kept in a prison of ignorance, superstition, and semi-savagery, to come from darkness to light. Civilisation, defined as I have defined it, will induce a man to approach another in the two ways named just now. It will labour to improve him in conduct and character. This is a very different thing from telling him that unless he cuts a canal through his country, or buys piece goods of your Manchester, you will bombard his towns, land on his coast, and dictate a treaty to him in his capital."

"We shall be led in a direction in which we do not wish to go if we suffer you to proceed without interruption," said Waverton. "Your beneficent civilisation with all its professions of respect for the territorial rights of others is to be, after all, an aggressive missionary power."

"Besides," added Mainwaring, "you have to remember one thing after all. We desire an outlet for our manufactures and employment for our young men. You will both call me a Philistine, but you cannot dispute the truth of the statement. England is not an educational establishment. It is a mercantile firm anxious to increase the number of its customers. The Western must approach the Eastern in one of three ways, by war, by religion, or by trade. Now, though recent facts tell against me, I am optimist enough to say that I believe fighting is going out. It is possible that the growth of scepticism may drive the clergy in despair of doing anything at home to go out in larger numbers than they have hitherto done, and so missions may become an important factor in

the question; but it is certain that we shall go on manufacturing cotton goods, and that we shall be obliged to make people buy them. It is a material question after all. The countries that tried to keep us out have one by one been compelled to open their ports. 'The diapason of our policy' is commerce. It is impossible to ignore the moving power of the world. In the days of old the cities rose into prominence and sunk into decay as the trade stream washed their busy quays. Coptos, whence the clerks and book-balancing caste of Egypt takes its name, is the emporium one day.¹ After a while Myos Hormos has greater advantages and supersedes Coptos, to be in turn thrust into the background by Philoteris Portus, which had a commercial reputation in the days of the Pharaohs. As it was in the beginning so it is to-day. It is not by ethical theories but by mutual interests that the nations will be guided in their treatment of each other."

Malreward replied, speaking rapidly and earnestly—

"This might have been the last word on the question some years ago, but we have learned, I sincerely believe, that this is not the sum of the whole matter. Believe me, the question has widened. There is a fourth speaker who will have to be listened to. Besides the soldier, the missionary, and the merchant there is 'the man in politics,'² not the politician remember; and if he says, with no uncertainty in his tone, what shall be our animating principle, and appeals to the national conscience we shall find that henceforth the dealings of states

¹ See the inimitable burlesque prospectus in Mr. Mackenzie Wallace's *Egypt and the Egyptian Question*, p. 49.

² The whole passage whence the quotation comes is worth reading: "It is specially true that he who holds offices of public trust runs a thousand hazards of sinking into a party man instead of man employing party instrumentality for its ulterior purposes; into a politician instead of man in politics; into an administrator instead of man in administration." —MR. GLADSTONE in *The State in its Relations to the Church*.

with each other will be swayed by higher laws than have been recognised before. Not what we can get out of the country, but what we can make of the man in it will be the first consideration. I do hope that a beginning is being made here in Egypt. It seems to me that this occupation is one of the greatest events in the history of the world. It is an opportunity which is an importunity crying, trumpet-tongued, to every man concerned to try and make this the starting point of a new policy. The unique character of this country makes it a duty of extraordinary interest, and of course of extraordinary difficulty."

"We are all agreed as to the difficulty," said the two listeners, for Malreward's flowing speech compelled them to adopt that subordinate part.

"I grant," continued Malreward, "that we are here under circumstances that can never be expected to recur, but I do say that if we even partially succeed in carrying out our ideal, we shall have supplied a practical commentary on my definition of civilisation, which I never expected to see in my most hopeful moments. We are here not to mow men down with shot and shell—"

"We had to begin with that, though, you must admit—" muttered Mainwaring; but Malreward took no notice of the interruption save by repeating the sentence he had just uttered, with more incisive emphasis—

"We are not here to mow men down with shot and shell, or to force them to change their religion, or to oblige them to change graceful garments for hideous ones. We are here, as I believe from my heart, with a single eye to the good of a people whose past has been piteous and hard beyond all words. We have come from our Western home on a mission which is many missions—in a word, we are going as far as I know for the first time to try and make six millions of human beings make the most of the powers

God has given them, and the country God has put them in. Just look at it in this light. A man acquires wide reputation if he secures the passing of one benevolent law through Parliament; we are going to readjust all the laws of a nation. A man gains the credit of being an enlightened statesman if he removes a single encumbering weight from the parliamentary machine; we are going to create an entire constitution. A man is held to have deserved an honourable place in history if he introduces an improved agricultural process on farm or field; we have promised to improve the productive powers of the whole of the Nile Valley. Army reform, sanitary reform, educational reform—all the tasks that have hitherto been undertaken slowly and hesitatingly when they were demanded for ourselves, we are going to undertake for a people to whom we are bound by the slenderest ties, and whose fields we are pledged to leave directly we see them white to the harvest our efforts have enabled them to reap. For years I have been weary of our political shortcomings and social hypocrisies; but I aver that this high enterprise gives me hopes of our England—yes! and of the reality of the progress of our epochs that I have been a stranger to of late. It is surely refreshing to turn from the subjects with which the thoughts of the English people have been employed for the last three or four years, to this attempt at unselfish political action. It proves that we really feel that we are stewards, not owners. It shows that we acknowledge that the vast estate of science and learning, and experience, is not to be used to aggrandise England, but is to be regarded as charged with debts to others—freely we have received, freely we should give:—

"No man is the lord of any thing,
Though in and of him there be much consisting,
Till he communicate his parts to others :
Nor doth he of himself know them for aught
Till he behold them form'd in the applause

Where they're extended; who, like an arch,
 reverberates
 The voice again, or, like a gate of steel
 Fronting the sun, receives and renders back
 His figure and his heat."¹

"This is a new doctrine in politics, and savours too strongly of the romantic school for me," said Mainwaring. "I think we shall have to pay dearly for furnishing you with an acted commentary on your definition of civilisation. We had two legitimate and obvious courses open to us; either of them would have been intelligible to the Egyptians and the European powers. They are briefly 'to go' or 'to stay.' There can be no doubt that we should have done good by the last course, but we will not discuss the question. I see one vulnerable point in your argument, however, which must not be passed over. You represent England as the inheritor of a storehouse of precious gifts, sciences, arts, and experiences, and you say she shows herself in a new and noble light when she gives of her abundance to Egypt, and sends her best men to undertake an enterprise as splendid in its unselfishness as it is bold in the novelty of its conception."

"But——"

Malreward interrupted, and continued, half answering the objector, half speaking to himself—

"That it bristles with difficulty I admit, but it is something to have made an attempt so novel and so generous. Should it not succeed I can only adopt Mrs. Siddons's reading of the great passage in *Macbeth*, and say, if the worst comes to the worst, '*We fail*;' but failure in such an attempt is better than victory with meaner motives, and it is better to be defeated in an attempt to drag Egypt from the sphinx-like shadow of an immemorial despotism than to add our names to the long catalogue of tyrants who have attempted to keep her under the black shadow beneath which her strength has dwindled and her ener-

gies withered for thirty centuries of bondage."

"But——" said Mainwaring, "for I rebel against being overwhelmed by your words, however grandiloquent and copious—you say we have given of our best. I say, in all fairness, we have not done so, for we have never had the courage of our Christian convictions. We are holding back, and carefully keeping behind, our Christianity; and though we know that Mohammedan institutions are the real cause of Egypt's weakness, we are discouraging every attempt to reform El Islam. If a missionary were to make a convert of an Arab to-morrow, should we not do all we could, in the timidity begotten of a faith professed only with the lips, to compel him to keep his convictions to himself?"

Malreward hesitated for a moment before he replied.

"I admit the truth of a part of your statement. In these days, a power entrusted with the charge of reforming a Mohammedan population must copy the *Gallio* of history, who, recollect, is not the Gallio of the evangelical pulpit. The champions of liberty must remember that liberty in religion is the highest form of freedom, and for the present we may apparently put that last which should be first."

"I am glad I have got you to concede that much at all events, for that concession convicts us of unreality," said Mainwaring.

"I am not disposed to agree with you," replied Malreward, "though I admit how telling and plausible your accusation seems. No! The motive power which induces us to make this attempt is the Spirit of the Divine Founder of Christianity. In every other case apparently akin to this that I recall, there has been a difference which, if rightly considered, proves the length and firmness of the step we have made. Hitherto we have sent sailors and soldiers in thousands, and traders, who, though perhaps good

¹ *Troilus and Cressida*, Act iii. sc. 3.

Christians enough, have never attempted to conceal the overmastering selfishness of their motives. This great body of soldiery and merchants has been accompanied, perhaps preceded, by a handful of missionaries. In effect, from the nature of the case, there has been one apostle of Christ and a thousand apostles of Mars and Mammon. The nature of this attempt makes every man, be he soldier or civilian, lawyer or man of science, a missionary."

"I wish," said Mainwaring, despondingly, "I wish I could see a gleam of hope of all this coming true. I have not had time to study the country for myself, but from all I have read, I should say you will only galvanise the officials into activity for a few months. By August all their promises will have been forgotten, and by the end of the year most of your lay missionaries who started high in hope in the autumn of 1882 will have sent in their resignations or returned, broken in health and spirits, anxious to bury in oblivion their share in the civilisation campaign. Remember this is not the first time when an illustrious statesman has dreamed of the regeneration of Africa and the beneficent reflex action of such a regeneration on Europe. Waverton will supply us with the peroration of Pitt's memorable speech, for it is a stock passage for every budding orator to commit to memory."

Waverton was pleased at being able to comply with the request, and repeated the lines:—

"Then also will Europe, participating in African improvement and prosperity, receive an ample recompense for the tardy kindness, if kindness it can be called, of no longer hindering that continent from extricating herself out of the darkness which in other more fortunate regions has been so much more speedily dispelled.

"Nos . . . primus equis Oriens afflavit anhelis,
Illic sera rubens accendit lumina vesper."¹

¹ Lord Stanhope mentions an incident connected with the delivery of this speech which shows how the orator acted on the painter's

"I do not want a stronger passage in support of my case," replied Malreward. "Look at the map of Africa in Pitt's time, a blank of unexplored regions, and compare it with the map of Africa now, and you see how much has been done in the seven decades that have passed since that speech was delivered. Because the explorer, the missionary, the colonist, have done so much, I have confidence that they will do more. Compare the Egypt of to-day with the Egypt of the Mameluke beys, and surely, in spite of its long furrows of suffering, we see traces of improvement and auguries of hope."

"Of one thing we may be certain," returned Mainwaring, "that however egregious may be your collapse, you will never acknowledge it. You believe in your prescriptions, and will declare they cure the patient even if he happens to drop through your fingers in the process. Faith is the power of ignoring failure."

"Say rather," said Malreward, rising with the air of one who closes a discussion, "say rather there is no failure when there is faith. Of that we western folk have far too little. Look there—"

He pointed to their Arab servant, who, gravely and slowly after the manner of his race, recited the prescribed prayers.

* * * *

The travellers waited until he had ended his devotions. Then ordered their carriage, and drove back to Cairo in silence.

A jagged cloud crossed the moon's disc, and a trick of flitting shadow gave to the great stone lips of the mysterious creature the semblance of a cynic smile.

motto "never lose an accident": "I have heard it related by some who at that time were members of Parliament, that the first beams of the rising sun shot through the windows of the House in the midst of this final passage, and seemed as Pitt looked upwards to suggest to him without premeditation the eloquent simile and the noble Latin lines with which he concluded."—*STANHOPE'S Life of Pitt*, p. 146.

JUVENTUS MUNDI.

BY THE LATE CHARLES KINGSLEY.

LIST a tale a fairy sent us
 Fresh from dear Mundi Juventus.
 When Love and all the world was young,
 And birds conversed as well as sung;
 And men still faced this fair creation
 With humour, heart, imagination.
 Who come hither from Morocco
 Every spring on the Sirocco.
 In russet she, and he in yellow,
 Singing ever clear and mellow,
 "Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet you, sweet you,
 Did he beat you? Did he beat you?"
 Phyllophneustes wise folk call them,
 But don't know what did befall them,
 Why they ever thought of coming
 All that way to hear gnats humming,
 Why they built not nests but houses,
 Like the bumble-bees and mousies.
 Nor how little birds got wings,
 Nor what 'tis the small cock sings—
 How should they know—stupid fogies?
 They daren't even believe in bogies.
 Once they were a girl and boy,
 Each the other's life and joy.
 He a Daphnis, she a Chloe,
 Only they were brown, not snowy,
 Till an Arab found them playing
 Far beyond the Atlas straying,
 Tied the helpless things together,
 Drove them in the burning weather,
 In his slave-gang many a league,
 Till they dropped from wild fatigue.
 Up he caught his whip of hide,
 Lashed each soft brown back and side
 Till their little brains were burst
 With sharp pain, and heat, and thirst.
 Over her the poor boy lay,
 Tried to keep the blows away,
 Till they stiffened into clay,
 And the ruffian rode away.
 Swooping o'er the tainted ground,
 Carrion vultures gathered round,
 And the gaunt hyenas ran
 Tracking up the caravan.

But—Ah, wonder! that was gone
Which they meant to feast upon.
And, for each, a yellow wren,
One a cock, and one a hen,
Sweetly warbling, flitted forth
O'er the desert toward the north.
But a shade of bygone sorrow,
Like a dream upon the morrow,
Round his tiny brainlet clinging,
Sets the wee cock ever singing,
"Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet you, sweet you,
Did he beat you? Did he beat you?"
Vultures croaked, and hopped and flopped,
But their evening meal was stopped.
And the gaunt hyenas foul,
Sat down on their tails to howl.
Northward towards the cool spring weather,
Those two wrens fled on together,
On to England o'er the sea
Where all folks alike are free.
There they built a cabin, wattled
Like the huts where first they prattled,
Hatched and fed, as safe as may be,
Many a tiny feathered baby.
But in autumn south they go
Past the Straits, and Atlas' snow,
Over desert, over mountain,
To the palms beside the fountain,
Where, when once they lived before, he
Told her first the old, old story.
"What do the doves say? Curuk-Coo,
You love me and I love you."

MEISSONIER.

A FEW months ago Paris was horrified by an act of vandalism, almost of sacrilege. A deadly insult had been offered to one of the greatest of her great men. The eccentric wife of an American millionaire had engaged Meissonier to paint her portrait, and, as too often happens, was not pleased with the picture when it was done. There was a quarrel, some say about the goodness of the likeness, some say about the price, and in a fit of pique the lady, who claimed to do what she would with her own, flung the precious panel into the fire. Naturally the artists, the critics, and the public in general cried out that such an act was scarcely better than the burning of the Tuileries, and all kinds of vengeance were darkly hinted at. Whether it was in consequence of the act of the American iconoclast that M. Petit, the great picture dealer of the Rue de Séze, determined to open a Meissonier exhibition we cannot tell, but if it was, no happier revenge could have been taken by an indignant and ingenious country. Since the 23rd of last month the crowds which have visited the Galerie Petit have been the answer of Paris to the fantastic insolence of New York.

It is a severe ordeal, this gathering together of the whole or the greater part of an artist's works into one room, to be examined and judged independently, without the support that comes from contrast. Very few reputations come out of it unscathed. In England we have had a considerable number of such shows of late, and in most cases the harm done to the artist's fame has been irreparable. Who, after the Creswick exhibition of some years ago, will ever care to look at a Creswick again? Linnell's picturesqueness was proved to be little

more than a trick, by the comparison of all the works of his middle and later manner which was made possible a year ago. Even Landseer suffered a little from the Landseer exhibition. Mr. Alma-Tadema, indeed, went through the fire, and bore the trial with but little harm; Mr. Watts and Sir Joshua Reynolds emerged victorious. But it requires very rare qualities to be able to do so, and the living artist who would submit himself to the proof must be very conscious of his strength before he ventures. Monotony, artificiality, mannerism—these may pass unnoticed if we have but one or two of a man's pictures before our eyes; an exhibition of his whole work reveals them in an instant. To face such an exhibition with success a man must have variety, naturalness, style.

The marvellous variety, the complete mastery of the secrets of nature, the style, the distinction of Meissonier have been more than proved by this extraordinary exhibition, in which some eighty of his pictures, besides a dozen water-colour drawings and several studies, have been brought together. The exhibition will be of historical interest, and the gratitude of all people of taste and sense is due to the owners who have so generously lent them "*au profit de l'Hospitalité de Nuit*," the excellent charity which is to receive the admission money. The list does not, of course, cover the whole of Meissonier's work, for some of his early paintings seem to have disappeared, and the pictures belonging to Americans could not, under the present ridiculous tariff law, be lent without having to pay duty on re-importation. Thus the famous "1807," among others, is missing from the catalogue, just as we missed the *Sappho* from the Alma-Tadema exhi-

bition. But still, the collection is singularly comprehensive, and besides including all the famous works which are to be found in European galleries, it includes a number of early pictures—the earliest of all being among them—and many, lent by the painter, that have never been seen before. Taking a rapid chronological survey, we find the list goes from *Les Bourgeois Flamands* of 1833 to *Le Chant* of last year, and thus covers the space of exactly half a century. One or two small works, obviously modelled on the great Dutch painters, represent the work done before 1840; then come the *Violoncello Player*, the portrait of Meissonnier's doctor, and a very few more, dated between 1840 and 1850. These are still somewhat youthful in style, a little hard in execution, and wanting in the last touch which implies mastery. But soon after 1850 the painter is at his best. His fortieth year has struck; his talent is mature. Instead of perpetual repetitions of *Liseurs*, *Fumeurs*, and so forth, he rises to the very height of intense dramatic and historical painting; he gives us *Les Bravos*, with its unsurpassable rendering of human villainy; he gives us *Moreau et Dessoles*, superb in its drawing of horses, and complete in its historic significance. It was from the Universal Exhibition of 1855, as is well known, that Prince Albert brought *La Rixe*, the gift of Napoleon III.; and *La Rixe* displays special qualities which Meissonnier has never surpassed. He has immensely extended his field of vision since then; he has proved himself, in the *Portrait du Sergent* and other pictures, to be as miraculous a painter of light as Peter de Hooch himself, and in the Napoleon series he has told the history of the First Empire; but almost all that he has achieved since was potentially present in *La Rixe* in 1855.

It is, then, to the twenty years that followed 1833 that we have to look if we wish to trace the growth of Meissonnier's talent. The first half of them at least were, to him, years of struggle.

He earned but little, and he had nothing but what he earned. His early years at Lyons, where he was born in 1811, were years of absolute poverty; that much we gather from the scanty admissions which, pending the appearance of his long-promised *Souvenirs*, are all that he has been induced to make to curious biographers. In 1830 he came to Paris, set to work to make some drawings, and was introduced by Tony Johannot into the studio of Léon Cogniet, whose sole title to fame will probably be that he was for a season Meissonnier's master. In 1833 the young painter exhibited his first work, *Les Bourgeois Flamands*; and he sold it for a hundred francs to the Société des Amis des Arts, from whom it was bought by M. Poturle, a well-known amateur of the day. At his sale it passed into the possession of Sir Richard Wallace, who sends it, with four others, to the present exhibition.

The art world of Paris at the time of Meissonnier's *début* was passing through the most feverish and agitated period of its modern history. Never had the interests of letters and of painting been so closely intermingled, and the great disturbing influences of Romanticism were felt with equal strength among the artists and the poets. Painters like Delacroix steeped themselves in Shakespeare and Goethe; even in distant Normandy young Millet, who did not arrive in Paris till 1837, pored over Scott and Victor Hugo, and thrilled under the typical excitements of the time; while at the famous first performance of *Hernani* in January, 1830, there were almost as many artistic as literary *rapins* among the enthusiastic crowd which waited eight long hours for the drawing up of the curtain. Meanwhile the forces of the "perruques," that is to say of the classicists in literature and art, were still strong in all directions, and in art they had one stronghold which gave them an enormous advantage over the attacking host of Romantics; they filled the Institute,

and the Institute, as represented by the Académie des Beaux Arts, controlled the Salon, and contemptuously rejected whom it would among the "dabblers" who followed not the tradition of David. In those days the Salon was held in the Louvre. A temporary wooden gallery was erected in the Place du Carrousel, while inside the walls of the Salle Carrée were covered in for the occasion, and the first efforts of Fromentin or Diaz, of Millet or Meissonnier, were hung over concealed Raphaels and Titians patiently awaiting underneath the moment of their release and revenge. No one knew beforehand whether his picture was accepted or no, and consequently the eager pushing crowd which filled the Place du Carrousel on the 1st of April every year was amply provided with every possible motive for expectation and excitement. "It is difficult," says M. Du Camp, in his amusing *Souvenirs*, "to imagine the Place du Carrousel and the approaches to the Louvre as they were at this epoch (1847), with the dog-sellers, the *bric-à-brac* dealers, the open-air dentists, and conjurors who blocked up the unpaved square, of which the surface was deep mud or deeper dust according as the weather was wet or fine. The Rue du Doyenné, the Rue des Orties which ran along the great gallery, the Rue St. Thomas du Louvre, and the Rue Froimanteau, which the new buildings of the Ministry of Finance have replaced, closed in the square on which the crowd was gathered. Nowadays the whole neighbourhood has been so changed by the junction of the Louvre and the Tuileries that its old features are no longer recognisable.—About a quarter to twelve the surging mass began to close round the great door, and the pushing grew formidable. Sometimes above the general murmur one would hear a young student's vibrating voice crying, '*L'Institut de la Lanterne!*' We laughed, and some old classic gone astray among us Romantics would grumble out, 'What

are we all coming to, *mon Dieu*; what are we all coming to?' At the first stroke of twelve the wide door flew open, and the well-known figure of the Swiss guard, who always officiated, halberd in hand, with red coat, knee breeches, and cocked hat, appeared upon the threshold. '*Vive le père Hénaut!*' cried the crowd, and then there was a rush, the stairs were cleared, and each artist ran feverishly over the catalogue to see if his name was inscribed there before penetrating into the Salle Carrée."

At the time when Meissonnier began to exhibit, the idol of the young Romantics was Delacroix. He sent his first picture to the Salon of 1822. The classic painter Gros, a man of great power, but so troubled and bewildered by innovations which he could not understand, and could not bring himself to tolerate, that he presently put himself quietly and tragically out of the world, sent for the young artist and said to him bluntly, "You are a colourist, my young friend, but you draw like a pig!" The second half of this remark roughly expressed the feeling which swayed the academical jury for many a year, and the majority of Delacroix's glowing canvases were returned to him, Salon after Salon. In the drawing-rooms of Paris, where he was personally extremely popular, men shook their heads over him with compassionate vexation, distressed to think that "so good a fellow could paint such things." Delacroix, however, held his own way, and formed a school of followers as numerous and far more enthusiastic than ever Ingres could boast. But, though he was an intimate friend of Meissonnier, and though, strange as it may seem, this "colourist who drew like a pig," admired Meissonnier so much as to say that of all French painters this painter of minute subjects was "*le seul qui avait de la grandeur*," he exercised no influence whatever upon Meissonnier's art. Nor, for the matter of that, did any modern artist. As Théophile Gautier said, Meissonnier's originality "*a trouvé sa*

formule sans tâtonnements;" it had no need to grope for a means of expressing itself. His taste led him away from the modern studios, away from the lists where Classics and Romantics held their endless tournament, to the Louvre, to the canvases of Terburg and Metzu; and from these great masters he learned how character and incident might be portrayed. He learned from them that the first element of success in the genre-painter must be the keen and patient observation of life; that with exact drawing, solid modelling, and a just sense of the right distribution of light and shade the smallest picture may have the attributes of great art, and even a single figure six inches high be made interesting.

Some years before 1850, as we have said, Meissonier had brought the public over to him, and the battle-cries of the conflicting schools were silent as people flocked round his little pictures at each successive Salon. By this time, in fact, he had almost formed a school of his own; MM. Plasson, Fauvilet, and others had begun the long list of his imitators which has gone on increasing in France and Germany, till our own day, and which now includes such dexterous artists as M. Seiler, M. Holwey, M. Léo Herrmann, and even, in certain aspects of his work, our own brilliant young Academician, Mr. Gow. "The invasion of the miniature" was the object of many a serious protest from critics at home and abroad; and more than one writer of mark, who failed to see the strength and the seriousness underlying Meissonier's work, lifted up a warning voice against what they supposed to be the trivial turn that art was taking. Trivial in the hands of his followers art may have become; but not in his own.

We have named the years following 1850, as the period at which Meissonier's talent reached maturity; and it may be well if we follow him from that time onward along the walls of the exhibition, choosing a few of

his chief works here and there by way of illustration. With the date of 1849, we have one of his masterpieces of minute execution, the well-known *Joueurs de Boules*, a party in eighteenth century costume, amusing themselves with a game of bowls on the coast at Antibes, a little picture flooded with light, and drawn on a canvas "not much larger than the lid of a snuff-box," with a force and solidity that would gain nothing were the dimensions to be multiplied by ten. But it was 1853 that was the first *Annus Mirabilis* of Meissonier, when he exhibited at least four works of the first importance, totally different from one another in subject and style, and yet all of them as near perfection as it is given to the human hand to attain. These were *The Young Man Working*, *A Scene from the Decameron*, *Moreau and Dessoles*, *Une Reconnaissance dans la Neige*, and *The Bravos*. It was the first of these that drew Gautier's enthusiastic tribute; and Gautier, be it remembered, was a Romantic *pur sang*, who had put Delacroix side by side with Hugo, and had worshipped *La Barque de Don Juan* as a revelation. "It is a great art," he says, "that of inspiring interest with a single figure; and Meissonier possesses it in the highest degree. The painters who cannot compose a picture without setting in motion all history, all legend, and every philosophy, would never speak of such a subject as this; and yet what a charm it is that keeps your eyes fixed upon this *Young Man Working*,"—this young scholar of Diderot's time, who sits at his table before a bookcase crowded with delicious-looking volumes in *veau fauve* or paper covers:—"no doubt he is at work upon some article for the *Encyclopédie*!" But this is not all that Meissonier gives us as the fruit of the year 1853. He has much besides the single, tranquil figure, brimming as that is with life, and composed with a science of which even Metzu has given no example. As though in answer to those

who complained that he banished the graces from his studio and never painted women, he condescends to meet Watteau on his own ground, and gives us a *Scene from the Decameron*—an eighteenth century Decameron—a poet reading his work to a group of lovely creatures, met together in the Park of Versailles. Then, turning alike from the placid interior with its books and its absorbed student, and from the graceful illusion of the *fête champêtre*, he takes us to the snow-covered Bavarian slopes and to the eve of Hohenlinden. It was a "new departure;" it was a venture into the domain of the battle painters and the painters of horses; and those who admired Meissonnier's *Smokers* and *Guitar Players* the most, were those who were most anxious as to its success. But from the moment it was hung, they saw that to doubt had been a foolish blunder. The same mastery of line, the same intimate knowledge of every anatomical detail, the same power of grouping which had charmed them in his interiors was present in this picture, where the general and his chief of the staff stood reconnoitring on a snowy mound, while their mounted orderlies held their horses below. We cannot say whether these horses were the first that Meissonnier had ever drawn; but if they were, he showed in them, as he showed in the illustrations to the *Contes Rémois* five years later, and as he showed still more triumphantly in the Napoleon series, that he knew horses like a professor of anatomy, and loved them like an Arab sheikh.

Then there was *The Bravos*, deservedly one of the most celebrated of his works. It is of slightly larger dimensions than the rest; the figures are perhaps a foot high, or more. One of them, with dagger ready for the thrust, bends breathlessly forward to the key-hole of the door through which the victim is about to pass; the other, with drawn sword, stands in reserve close by. The composition is simple enough; but what movement, what animation,

what imminence of action is here! How the faces, the gestures of the men, "suborned to do this piece of ruthless butchery," are instinct with life and with every kind of ferocious passion! But still more famous is the picture which was the chief representative of Meissonnier's art in the Paris Exhibition of 1855, and which now Queen Victoria has gracefully allowed to return for a season to the city whence her husband received it. This is *La Rixe*, not well-known in itself—for how rarely do even students of art find their way into the Gallery of Buckingham Palace!—but well-known from photographs, and destined to be known still better from the etching which M. Bracquemond, one of the most original of French etchers, has been engaged to make from it. This, too, is a "costume piece," the scene laid in the early seventeenth century, in some Paris tavern, such as "the King's servants" and "the servants of the Cardinal" used to frequent, in the thrilling days of the *Trois Mousquetaires*. One, the assailant, has drawn his dagger, and is struggling in the arms of his two companions to get to his enemy, who, pushed back by a third peacemaker, is in the act of drawing his sword. But no words can describe the rushing movement and the fierce struggle of the scene as Meissonnier has painted it, or the intensity of expression with which he has invested not only every face, but every limb, of every actor in the scuffle. A little authentic detail, as yet, we believe, unpublished, will throw an interesting light upon the painter's manner of working. The very centre of the picture, the point on which the eye falls first as expressing the furious action of the combatants in its most concentrated form, is the neck of the assailant, the muscles of which seem ready to burst with the effort he is making to get free. When Meissonnier was painting the picture, he could not, of course, keep his group constantly posed before him; so he fastened a rope to the wall, and made

the model strain against it with all the force he could muster. The man could not keep up the tension at its extreme point for more than a few seconds ; so Meissonnier made him do it time after time till he had mastered the set of the muscles. It was an instance of the same passion for reality, the same resolve to leave nothing to chance, which led him, when he was painting "1814," to borrow Napoleon's coat from the National Museum, to have it copied line for line and crease for crease, and to dress himself in it, mount a wooden horse in his studio, and sit for hours before a mirror, till he had mastered every detail.

Though he fought *en bon Republicain* in the siege of Paris—Manet, the impressionist, was by an odd hazard a fellow officer of his—Meissonnier was Imperialist enough under the Empire. His *Napoleon III. at Solferino*, lent by the Luxembourg to this exhibition, was a commission from the emperor ; it was long delayed, and was first shown at the Salon of 1864. It altogether yields in interest, however, to the celebrated cycle illustrating the campaigns of Napoleon I., of which four pictures only have been painted—"1805" (or *Les Cuirassiers*), "1807" (*Friedland*), "1814" (*Retraite de Russie*), and the small *Napoleon*, which Mr. Ruskin bought for 1,000*l.* some twenty years ago and sold again for close upon 6,000*l.* in 1882. The "1807" is in America, but M. Delahante has lent "1814," and the other two are also in M. Petit's exhibition. Undoubtedly they represent the highest achievement of Meissonnier's art, and among them—though the small *Napoleon* is faultless in its way—"1814" is pre-eminent. On the first plane of the picture rides the emperor on his white horse, with a throng of marshals and generals behind him ; beyond, in a parallel line, marches the ragged, shivering infantry. The ground is frozen so hard that it seems as though it would never be thawed ; the track is made rougher for the horses' feet by

the ruts cut by the artillery. The foot-soldiers are struggling bravely against cold, hunger, and despair. On the features of the staff, Drouot, De Flahault, and the rest, sadness, disappointment are written, but not anger ; Berthier sleeps in the saddle ; only Ney, next behind the emperor, seems bracing his nerves against misfortune, and meditating another blow. But Napoleon, what of him ? His face is set, firm as the ice beneath him, grey as the sky above ; on his brow and in his eyes is written the history of France for twenty years—its ambitions, schemes, hopes, plans, successes, and defeat. To have painted such a face, had that been all, would of itself have stamped Meissonnier as one of the great artists.¹

On the whole, there can be little doubt that "1814" is the painter's masterpiece. Other works of his, indeed, show precisely the same qualities as this—the same science, the same power of expressing much in little space, the same mastery of all technical resources—but none in the same marvellous combination with a subject of high and general interest. The *Friedland* follows it in date, but not many other works of the first importance have come from Meissonnier's hand since these two were finished. He has indeed done some pictures for his own gratification, such as a view of the Tuileries in ruins ; a wonderful sketch of M. Thiers after death ; and a singing lesson, *Le Chant*, which seems to be his latest picture, and which is by no means a satisfactory example. Besides, he has done some portraits, such as the hapless one of Mrs. Mackay ; and, in a word, at seventy-three years of age he is robust and full of energy, able to paint as much as he chooses, and ready to enjoy to the full the two wonderful houses that he has built for

¹ The picture has just been brilliantly engraved in line by M. Jules Jacquet, for M. Petit. Those curious in such matters may like to know that M. Delahante (who paid 1,000*l.* for the picture) has just refused 18,000*l.* for it. It measures about 2 feet by 16 inches.

himself at Poissy and on the Boulevard Malesherbes—that quarter of Paris so much affected, as M. Claretie has lately told us, by the painters who belong to the *École du Bank-note*. Meissonnier, indeed, has never professed any scruples about the bank-note, or has pretended that he was above being paid for his work at the highest market rate. But one thing besides he has not done—he has never condescended to make money by scamping his work, or even by deliberately choosing subjects which he might paint with little trouble. Of how many successful painters can this be said, now at least, when the moment a man has made a name he is beset by dealers offering him his own terms for anything he chooses to sign? It was only the other day that a celebrated English artist, turning over some old canvases, found some which he had left unfinished twenty years ago; marvels of delicate workmanship, every flower and every branch wrought with loving care, and the lines of the distant headland studied with the most scrupulous fidelity. *Now*, he paints large pictures in a broad, effective style, and sells his half-dozen a year at great prices. But when he looked at the small unfinished landscapes he owned, not without many searchings of heart, that the popular stuff that he now turns out to order is worth nothing in comparison with the work he did while he was making his reputation.

This power of self-control in the face of what must be a perpetual

temptation, is perhaps the most admirable moral fact in Meissonnier. He has never sent out from his studio a piece of work that is not the best he could do at the time. What labour has gone to each and all of his pictures; how he has painted out and painted out, and made wax models of his horses, and studied his costumes in all possible combinations; how he steeped himself in the serious literature of the eighteenth century, till he became, as Gautier said, a more truthful interpreter of it than Eisen or Moreau, than even Diderot or Sedaine—all this is known to his friends; and the result is seen in the marvellous little canvases that shine from the walls in the Rue de Sèze. "Patience and conscience" are his, as Balzac said of the artists of the Netherlands; and if we were to ask what else, we might answer—over and above his unequalled manual skill—intelligence and sanity. The mind that conceived the Napoleon of "1814" and of Mr. Ruskin's picture, and that thought out the faces of the admiring soldiers in the *Portrait du Sergent*, is a mind that pierces through and through every disguise, that grasps character as if by instinct. Lastly, Meissonnier is before all things sane, measured, orderly, delighting in proportion and harmony, and hating extravagance. What a lesson he reads in this matter to half those painters whose works are at this moment offered to our admiration at the Royal Academy—or, indeed, at the Salon!

COOKERY TEACHING UNDER THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.

THE feeling which has of late been gaining ground among us in favour of creating technical schools, induced the London School Board to appoint a special committee to inquire whether classes for such instruction could be established under their direction. The committee, however, while admitting the importance of technical knowledge, came to the conclusion that it was beyond the province of the Board to found classes for the teaching of handicrafts, by which is here meant employments followed for gain. But although the impracticability of introducing technical instruction generally has been thus recognised by the London School Board, they have, ever since they commenced their work, supplied special teaching of this character to their female pupils, *i.e.* in needlework, and, during the last seven or eight years, in cookery. These two industries in their lower grades are, indeed, so closely interwoven with the daily life of women in all but the wealthy classes, that we cease to regard them as handicrafts at all, except in that higher development which can only be reached through an apprenticeship.

The instruction in needlework and in cookery which our girls receive is then distinctly technical, though necessarily it does not advance beyond the elementary stage. Some knowledge of these arts is essential to the comfort of the working classes, a fact, however, so little recognised among them, especially with regard to cookery, that the Committee of Council on Education have wisely encouraged its study by placing it in their code as a subject of instruction for girls. Another subject—like this limited to the older girls—is known by the comprehensive and somewhat high-sounding title of Domestic Economy. It includes instruction—

of course only theoretic—in various subjects, among them house cleaning, nursing, and cooking. Practical teaching in cookery was added as the complement to its theoretical study; and so in part it remains, though the grant offered by the Education Department in 1883 enabled the Board to admit to their cookery classes girls who have not yet reached a position in the school entitling them to enter that for domestic economy. This grant for girls, in whatever standard, having attained the age of twelve, who learn to cook, induced the Board thus to extend such instruction—a beneficent concession as regards the miserable dwellers in the slums of our metropolis. Their irregular attendance keeps them still in the lower standards, when the age comes for them to leave school and earn their own livelihood, and knowledge which will enable these poor children to command somewhat higher wages than otherwise, as mere drudges, they could hope to obtain is of greater value to them than even a competent knowledge of the three R's. It is to be regretted that the more catholic grant of 1883 has, by an alteration in this year's Code, been restricted to those girls who have attained to the fourth and higher standards; not an exalted level indeed, but alas, beyond the reach of many who as yet—and then by painful compulsion alone—make but a meagre and unpunctual attendance.

But long before the Education Department had recognised practical cookery as a fitting subject for the instruction of girls, the London School Board had determined to introduce it into their schools. The first suggestion for such teaching made by Mr. John Macgregor, so well known as Rob Roy, dates as far back as 1874, and instruction on a small scale was begun in the

next year. But improvements demand time. Teachers had to be trained, and other hindrances arose causing delay. The system finally adopted in 1878 was formulated by Mr. Heller, one of the representatives for Lambeth.

It had been intended that cookery should be taught in each school by one or more of the mistresses on the staff. But experience soon showed that instruction could be more conveniently and systematically given in rooms erected for the purpose on the premises, apart from the main building, of certain suitably placed schools. One class room or "cookery centre" would thus suffice for several schools; all within a certain distance would send thither their contingent of pupils. These centres rose one after the other to meet increasing needs, until at the present time there are thirty spread over the School Board area; while more are in building or projection. As instruction is needed for about 21,000 girls per annum, or about one-fifth of the whole number on the school rolls, a number, of course, constantly increasing, and as each of the existing centres can afford instruction to only between five and six hundred during the year, it is plain that additional centres must be built. A few schools there are so near the boundary of the School Board area that there is little probability of a centre coming within their range. In several of these the Board have already fitted up a class-room to serve this purpose.

The cookery centre consists of a vestibule fitted with pegs for cloaks and hats, and a class-room, together measuring twenty-four feet by twenty-one, well lighted, and so ventilated as to prevent the smell of cooking from affecting unpleasantly either teacher or pupil. On one side of the room are seats and desks sufficient to accommodate from twenty to thirty girls so raised, one behind the other, that all can see what the teacher is doing. In the corners opposite to the desks are two small cooking ranges, and along the wall between them is the

dresser, with plates and dishes ranged on shelves above. Across the room, leaving, however, at one end ample space for passing, a long table or counter runs, in which half way along is inserted a gas cooking stove. The dresser is fitted with cupboards and drawers, and the saucepans are kept on the pot-board under the counter, technically known as the "demonstration table." A large recess on one side is fitted with a sink, where water is laid on; a provision safe, with a couple of chairs and a clock complete the furniture of the centre.

The supervision of these centres was at first undertaken by volunteer ladies, but as the classes increased in number it was found necessary to appoint a paid officer, who should overlook the whole. Her designation is Superintendent of Cookery. It is her duty to report to the School Board, through its Cookery sub-committee, on the condition of the centres, the capacity and conduct of the staff. She examines the bills for provisions, and renders an account of all disbursements and receipts to the Board.

When separate centres were established, in which cookery classes, consisting of pupils from many different schools, were to be held on every school day during the week, the mistresses on the staff could no longer undertake this branch of the work. Special instructors were therefore appointed. The qualification for this post has been the diploma of some well-known school of cookery. The majority of the instructors employed by the Board have been trained at South Kensington, but a serious disadvantage here arises, for though these teachers may possess a competent knowledge of their art, and the power of imparting that knowledge, unless they have also acquired experience in the teaching of children in class, they lack the capacity to maintain the discipline essential to success.

To meet this difficulty the Board determined last year to try the experiment of training their own cookery

instructors. They chose candidates who were already elementary teachers, but who for some sufficient reason preferred taking up instruction in cookery as their calling, rather than pursue the course of study necessary to fit them for the higher ranks of their profession. The candidates were placed under our most competent instructors for six months training at the centre, and attended also an evening course of twenty lessons in higher class cooking. The period of training completed, they underwent a tri-partite examination in the theory of cooking, its practice, and in the management of a class. This experiment has succeeded well enough to warrant a continuance of the plan, and fresh candidates continue to enter upon their course of training.

Each instructor has under her a "kitchen maid," whose duties consist in keeping the centre and utensils clean, lighting fires, and in rendering assistance to the instructor when she is teaching, to prevent her attention from being called away from her class.

The Committee of Council requires that each girl shall receive forty hours instruction in cooking during her school year, i.e. the period between each annual government inspection. To fulfil this condition she attends a course of twenty lessons. Should she (as is frequently the case) fail to be present at every lesson of her appointed course, she must attend the next, once every week, until the required number is completed.

The teaching of cookery requires a large amount of material. For instance, the cost of provisions for the month, ending March 15th in the current year, amounted to 77l. If this were not sold when cooked, the loss would be so great as to render this branch of our work impracticable. Therefore, a sale must be secured for our dishes. No sale can be found for ill-dressed food. Tolerably good cooking is therefore essential; and not only must our dishes be well cooked, but they must be such as the customers

we can attract will buy. These consist principally of the pupils themselves, and of the teachers in the schools at which the centres are placed. But while dishes must be prepared which our customers will purchase, they must at the same time be adapted to supply the knowledge that it is the Board's aim to impart. We are sometimes asked why we do not employ the children in making soup or cheap stews, which would command, our critics believe, a ready sale among the poor of the neighbourhood. The answer is that it is not our object to cook for the poor, but to teach the girls the elements of the culinary art, an object incompatible with the preparation of large quantities of the same kind of food. While, therefore, our centres must not, on the one hand, endeavour to rival the variety of dishes in a restaurant, they must, on the other, avoid degenerating into a soup kitchen. We hope we have avoided both evils, for while our dishes command a more or less ready sale, their preparation is well adapted to invest the pupil with a by no means contemptible skill in simple cookery for present use, and should she in future desire to pursue the art to its higher branches, the elementary knowledge gained at our classes will be of invaluable assistance to her.

A syllabus, comprising twenty lessons, has been issued by the Board for use in the centres. It includes recipes for cooking different kinds of vegetables in various ways, for the making of inexpensive soups and stews, bread, plain cakes, coffee, &c., our pupils being taught to make coffee in an earthen jug, by the method approved by Dr. Vivian Poore.

Sick cookery is not omitted. The girls learn to make beef-tea, light puddings, mutton broth, and gruel, this last unexpectedly proving a saleable article. The syllabus also includes recipes for palatable dishes made from provisions which have been already cooked. Each girl, as has been said,

should receive one lesson a week until the course of twenty is completed. The recipes demonstrated in lesson number one, are repeated every day during the first week, those in lesson number two likewise during the next, and so on until the syllabus is exhausted. By this method, each pupil, if she attend regularly, may see the practical working of every recipe contained in the syllabus. As the cookery course begins at different times of the year, it occasionally happens that some vegetable or fruit required for a particular lesson is either altogether out of season, or would cost more than it is prudent to spend. When this occurs, the instructor substitutes for it a suitable recipe from another lesson, returning to the one omitted when the ingredients are cheap.

It is the duty of the instructor to see that her kitchen maid has every article, both utensil and ingredient, ready for the lesson which commences in the morning at 9.15, and in the afternoon at two o'clock. Girls who are in their places by 9.15 obtain a red or "punctuality" mark in the register, a certain number entitling them at the end of the quarter to a reward card, two such reward cards bringing a prize. Each girl has two copy-books, one for taking rough notes during the demonstration, the other in which to write out a fair copy of the recipe and "method." The former she carries home, that she may, if feasible, practise her cooking between her weekly lessons; the latter remains at the centre to be examined by the instructor, and becomes, when full, the property of the pupil.

The girls assembled and the roll called, the instructor, after distributing exercise books, pens, and pencils, takes her place behind the demonstration table, inquires whether any of her pupils desire to purchase, and, if so, what particular dishes from that day's lesson they have chosen. By this time she has also learned what the teachers have selected,

and can calculate the size and number of dishes to be prepared. She then announces the recipes, already written in large hand on the black board, to be copied by the girls into their note-books, thus:—

FRENCH VEGETABLE MARROW SOUP.

Ingredients.—2 lb. pumpkin or marrow.
1 large onion.
2 oz. butter.
1 teaspoonful of sugar.
2 teaspoonfuls of salt.
 $1\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoonful of pepper.
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ pints of water.
1 pint of milk.
2 tablespoonfuls of flour.

Method.—Peel and cut the pumpkin or marrow into large squares. Peel and slice the onion. Put these vegetables into a saucepan, add the sugar, salt, pepper, and butter; put cover on saucepan. Simmer the vegetables well, add the water, stew slowly for twenty minutes, or until the vegetables pulp; then add the flour (previously mixed into a smooth paste with a little of the milk), add the rest of the milk. Stir the soup until it boils, then let it simmer for ten minutes. Stir frequently. Pour the soup into a basin, and serve with small squares of toast. If liked, the soup may be rubbed through a sieve before it is thickened.

Time, one hour.

CORNISH PASTIES.

Ingredients.— $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. buttock steak.
 $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. potatoes.
1 small onion.
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoonful of salt.
A pinch of pepper.
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of flour.
3 oz. of dripping.
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful of baking powder.
 $\frac{1}{2}$ gill of cold water.

Method.—Cut the meat into small pieces. Peel, wash, and parboil the potatoes and peel the onion. Cut the potatoes into small pieces and mince

the onion. Put the flour, salt, and baking powder into a basin, mix all together; rub in the dripping. Mix into a stiff paste with the water. Roll out a quarter of an inch thick. Cut into rounds. Place a portion of the meat, potato, and onion on each round; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Wet the edges, press them together. Make a frill on the top. Place on a greased baking tin. Bake half an hour.

Time, one hour.

It must be understood that these recipes are merely outlines. The instructor fills in the details as the lesson goes on. She begins by weighing or measuring her ingredients, and placing them in readiness before her. *Chemin faisant* she tells her pupils the prices per pound or pint, and the quantities she is about to use, calling upon them to calculate the entire cost of the dish. Thus the pupils acquire knowledge invaluable to them in their future marketings. I remember to have heard some years ago, at an examination in domestic economy, the inspector ask the girls—"What is the cost of a rabbit pie?" Should he now make such an inquiry of our cookery scholars, there might be found one sufficiently bold to inquire in a low whisper—of even so august a personage as H. M. Inspector—"Please, sir, how large is the rabbit pie?"

The girls having copied the recipe, they next take down the method from the instructor's dictation while she proceeds with her work, now talking, now cooking, while the girls are now writing, now watching, until the dish is finished. The next recipe is then taken in a similar manner, and so on until the demonstration is ended, during which the instructor must have maintained the attention of her pupils by her lively and intelligent dictation no less than by the skilful exercise of her art. Her next step is to direct one half of the class to make the fair copy of their rough notes while she sends the other division to wash their hands, *clean their nails*, and put on their cooking pinafores. She then sets

them to work at the table in couples or trios as convenience dictates. "I have many orders this morning," she might say; "meat patties, and fruit pies are wanted in the boys' school, several teachers have ordered soup or mutton broth, and a dozen patties are to be made for the girls. Luckily I have some patties and some broth left from yesterday afternoon, or we could not supply so many customers, but you must be very industrious girls, or we shall not have finished by twelve o'clock." So saying she directs the weighing of the different ingredients, for which, to save time, the centres are now supplied with two sets of scales. This accomplished with precision, the girls begin to prepare the ingredients, some washing vegetables, cleaning fish, cutting up meat, mixing the seasoning, and making the pie-crust, while others are busy with the soup or the broth—a pretty sight. The instructor meanwhile flits from group to group showing the best method, smoothing difficulties, preventing mistakes, superintending the whole class, including the party busily writing the fair copy of notes, until the time is exhausted for practice by the first division. They now return to the desks, while those who have been writing take their places (after washing their hands, &c.) at the demonstration table. Thus the work is carried on till the cooking is over. The instructor then shows how the food should be dished up and served. Twelve o'clock strikes, when knocks are heard, and little messengers arrive for the *plats* their teachers have ordered. The pupils clear away, leaving the table clean for the afternoon lesson, this part of the work being very popular. It is obvious that in the short time allotted to the learning of cookery there is but scant leisure for the girls to take part in the cleaning of the utensils; the instructors are enjoined, however, when opportunity arises to give their pupils practice in this important branch of a cook's education. A strict adherence to the lessons in the syllabus is usually required. But at seasons when certain

national dishes are in demand, we allow the order to be so far relaxed as to admit of these dishes being made, such as plum puddings just before the Christmas holidays, or pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. Further, when, at the end of last summer, fruit was cheap, preserves were permitted to be made during one week in all the centres. The whole quantity was bought up, the demand far exceeding the supply.

If we be asked how far our cookery teaching has found favour among the parents it would be difficult to give a conclusive answer. It is true we sometimes hear frivolous excuses from them to account for the non-attendance of their daughters at these classes. The girls, they may remark, go to school to learn reading and writing; as for cooking they can learn that at home. The School Board do not enforce attendance at the classes in cases where the parents object. They prefer to convince rather than to compel. But there are encouraging signs that our efforts in this direction are appreciated by both parents and children.

A widow, who had obtained leave for her daughter to become a half-timer, was nevertheless advised to let her attend school as often as possible. "Yes, I will," she answered; "and she shall always go to the cookery lesson. I don't intend her to miss *that*." A woman, stopping in the street the head mistress of a Board School, burst out with "When does the cookery class begin? I can't have my daughter left out on any account." At one of the centres a lady visitor asked a pupil if she were able to help her mother to cook. "I have no mother," was the answer, "but father likes my cooking." Another cookery scholar, her schoolmistress relates, so well replaced her absent mother that even the all-important Sunday dinner was dressed to the father's satisfaction. And yet another girl, one who had left school for service, proved the practical benefit received from the class. Watching, one day, her mistress's culinary operations, she thought a fatal error was about to be commit-

ted, and exclaimed, "Please, ma'am, *young* potatoes are put into *boiling* water." "How do you know that?" was the answer. "I learnt it at the cookery centre," she replied. "And can you cook?" her mistress rejoined. "Oh, yes, ma'am." She was allowed to try, and acquitted herself so well that henceforth her mistress gladly left the cooking to her.

The School Board for London are subjected every now and then to a storm of criticism—sometimes for their alleged extravagance, at others for their folly, or for the slovenly manner in which they perform their duties. But amid all this animadversion so liberally bestowed, we do not remember ever to have heard blame imputed to us for our cookery instruction. On the contrary, persons will exclaim, "Oh, do you teach cookery? That is something really useful." But though the instruction itself affords satisfaction, the apparatus we employ, and the dishes we prepare, not unfrequently meet with disapproval. For instance, the scales we use at the centres are said to be wholly out of place. "How extravagant you School Board people are! Scales, indeed! Why, the girls will never meet with them in their own homes. How will they manage there, do you suppose?" "All the better," we might answer, "for having been trained to be exact in our centres." Exactitude, the primary qualification for a good cook, can only be acquired by careful weighing and measuring. When this has been learned with proper apparatus, more homely appliances may be substituted; and this our instructors are careful to show their pupils.

Six years' experience has satisfied the London School Board that the system for teaching cookery they have established is well adapted to secure its object, though, doubtless, capable of further development; assuredly their aim will be constantly to improve and extend that teaching which the centres have been called into existence to afford.

ROSAMOND DAVENPORT-HILL.

ART AND LIFE: A DIALOGUE.

Warnford. I was a little surprised to see you at the "Grosvenor" private view this afternoon, Garniston.

Garniston. I am sorry for that. The surprise of an intimate friend at anything one does cannot possibly be flattering.

W. Why not?

G. Why not? Think a moment. If I have surprised you, I must have revealed some new point of character, compelling you to revise your former conception of me—perhaps for the better, perhaps for the worse. But how can it possibly flatter me to learn either that you undervalued me yesterday, or that I have fallen in your estimation to-day?

W. You are captious, my dear fellow. We may discover new qualities in a friend without its affecting our estimate of him, either for better or worse.

G. I believe that to be a mathematical impossibility. Every fact of character must have either a *plus* or a *minus* sign. But let us test it by the concrete case. You were surprised, you say, to see me at the private view. Why?

W. Well, I did not know you cared about art, or artists, or crowds of notabilities, or fashionable shows of any sort.

G. In other words, you did not know that I was either the better by an æsthetic faculty with which you had not credited me, or the worse by a frivolous taste of which you did not suspect me. Come! open your left hand. Which compliment are you going to offer me?

W. The first, unhesitatingly. I plead guilty to having appraised you at one faculty below your value. I pronounce you a hitherto unsuspected connoisseur in art.

G. And I disclaim the character. Art-connoisseurship, in so far as I have had an opportunity of inquiring into its parentage and means of subsistence, is the child of Prejudice handed over to Dogmatism to support. I like my opinions, such as they are, to be the children of Reason, who keeps alive no offspring that she cannot herself maintain.

W. That is a stern sort of mother, Garniston.

G. As Reason is. Is there any sacrifice in that kind of which her severity is incapable!—she who can look on unmoved while slowly-dying Faith, the most beautiful of her daughters, is calling to her for sustenance in vain.

W. Don't reckon too hastily upon that death, my friend. Sentiment has already adopted more than one of Madame Reason's deserted children, and Faith, who has been last received beneath her roof, may thrive there for many a year yet.

G. Amen! I am not one of those who think that mankind will be the better for her death.

W. If she perishes as Faith, she will survive as Hope. The world may no longer know her as that radiant house-damsel of its youth, who was wont to trip down stairs with the sunrise, the keys of Paradise jingling at her girdle, and every chamber ringing with her morning-song; but in the evening of man's days, he will still find her at his fireside, no longer joyous perhaps, but calm and cheerful, ever ready with the caress of consolation and the whisper of good courage.

G. True; but you should remember that even the most delightful of old maids is not immortal.

W. I know I should. I foresaw that objection, in fact, when it was

too late to escape it. I wish somebody would invent a metaphor with a handle. I never knew one that didn't cut your fingers.

G. Especially when you are trying, as you were just now, to snatch the edged tool from somebody else.

W. Yes, to be sure, it was you who first attacked me with it, in your refusal to allow connoisseurship a rational parentage. But surely you don't deny that there are *some* reasoned principles by which the merit of an artist's work may be judged.

G. I dare say there may be; but the only ones that I am acquainted with are so majestically abstract that they seem to me to throw no light whatever upon any concrete case.

W. Are they any less enlightening than literary canons of taste?

G. I think so. I imagine that I should find less difficulty in showing a student *why* such and such a passage was to be accounted good literature, and such and such another the reverse, than an art-professor would experience in giving reasons in any particular case for the faith that is in him.

W. I admit that you would have an advantage in the nature of your subject matter.

G. An immense advantage. Literary criticism is ultimately concerned with mental ideas, as to which there is little or no "personal equation" to be taken into account. But art criticism deals with sensory impressions varying infinitely as between individuals. How *convince* any one, for instance, that Mr. A.'s colouring is "mellow," and Mr. B.'s "crude," that X.'s "symphonies" are harmonious, and Y.'s horribly out of tune?

W. In questions of form, however, as distinct from colour, the difficulty does not arise.

G. Doesn't it? Take Mr. Burne Jones's ideal of beauty in the female form. You may accept or you may reject it, but you cannot deny that it differs sensibly from that of Rubens, and that neither is identical

with that of the modeller of the Melian Venus.

W. Yes, but—

G. Excuse me. I mustn't be beguiled by you into a disputation on art criticism. Why, moreover, is it necessary that I should be interested either in art criticism or in art? I can account otherwise for my visit this afternoon to the private view. Suppose I am interested in artists?

W. I can't entertain such a supposition—no offence to them. I have always found them the most self-centred of men.

G. And you think that makes them less interesting?

W. I certainly think it doesn't make them better company.

G. Who said anything about their company? I see, Warnford, that you are infected with the chief intellectual, as it is the chief social, vice of the times—the desire to be incessantly excited and amused. Men, even the most intelligent, seem nowadays to look round upon their fellows in the spirit, not so much of a Greek philosopher, as of a Roman emperor. Their question is not, What can I learn from you? but, What sport can you make for me? Look at the exaggerated horror with which we are accustomed in these days to speak of a bore. Yet how much profit we may often derive from listening to one!

W. You are thinking of George Herbert's "God takes the text and preaches patience."

G. No, most facetious of men, I am not. I am thinking of the instruction which we get from the man himself. You may learn something new of human nature from any one who is natural, and the bore is natural almost in very virtue of his definition. Will you tell me that his self-disclosing tediousness can teach one less than the false epigram, the artificial picturesque, the sham profundity, in which your celebrated talker is mostly found to deal? No! give me the bore.

W. With all my heart, and much

may you learn from him! Zeus, says Æschylus, "has founded knowledge upon suffering by a fixed law." But I hope the artists don't know your reason for cultivating their society.

G. They might know it, so far as I am concerned. It is you, not I, who have classed them, by implication, among the bores. All I said was in answer to your depreciatory remark upon these "most self-centred of men." It is their very self-absorption that makes them so interesting to me. That most of them care for nothing outside their art is the very thing that piques my curiosity about them. They are almost the only men I know—of those, I mean, whose calling involves the exercise of the higher faculties—who seem completely satisfied with the work of their lives. They are constantly employing their brains and imaginations, yet without apparently suffering any evil results from that most dangerous practice; they live in an atmosphere charged with the "malady of thought," yet never seem to catch it; they are as contented with their life as if they rode to hounds six times a week, and as assiduous in their work as if it were money-making.

W. So it is very often.

G. Yes; but I leave those cases out of account. There is no known employment so self-sufficing as the *chasse aux pièces de cent sous*, unless it be that other *chasse* which is chiefly dear to Englishmen. Once enslave yourself to the passion for killing as many animals, or for collecting as many sovereigns as possible in the course of the year, and you will never more be troubled with any vague mistrust of the worth of your work in life, still less with those darker misgivings of the value of life itself. But it is rare to find immunity from such heart-searchings among those whose nightly pillow is not smoothed for them by the daily indulgence either of the acquisitive or of the destructive instinct. The exercise of any other human faculty, whether it be imaginative energy, or speculative subtlety,

or scientific curiosity, appears to be attended among almost all men with increasingly imperfect satisfaction.

W. In the case of scientific curiosity, that is not to be wondered at. It presupposes an incurable dissatisfaction with existing knowledge.

G. No doubt; but not with the work of enlarging knowledge. You know the famous choice of Lessing between the two gifts presented to him in either outstretched hand of God. "Pure Truth, O Lord, is for Thee alone. Give me the search for truth. I will be content with that!" There indeed was a saying all aglow with that happy philosophic spirit of the eighteenth century—the saying of a man who found in the work of inquiry the perfect satisfaction of the soul. But is that the spirit that animates the inquirer of the present day? Is it in that spirit, for instance, that the man of science interrogates nature?

W. Well, no. I confess that he is given to interrogating her a little too much after the manner of a French *juge d'instruction*—that is to say with a preconceived theory to support.

G. Precisely. He is determined to make her admit that she alone is responsible, and no Person or Persons unknown. How can anybody contend that the pursuit of scientific truth brings peace to him who pursues it in these days? He is as much tormented by the speculative unrest of the age as any man; and it drives him to all sorts of distractions, controversial and other. He can't spend six consecutive months in the laboratory or the dissecting-room without getting so restless that he has to go out of doors and fight a parson to relieve his feelings. And when he isn't wrangling with Theology, he's flirting with Metaphysics.

W. Yes, that last is certainly the strangest phenomenon of our time.

G. Isn't it! And so significant. Who would have thought that Metaphysics, who only the other day plumped down exhausted by her

ineffectual dance of two thousand and odd years, was only to enjoy the repose of the "wall flower" for so short a time, and should be off again in a wild gallop with Physical Science, utterly discomposing the staid quadrille of the Positivists, and making one as giddy to look at her as ever she used to do in the days of her German waltz.

W. Well, I suppose I must give up the man of science. But I confess I am surprised that you should regard the life of art as more self-sufficing than that of letters.

G. The words "art" and "letters" are not mutually exclusive. There is a large department of literature which could not be self-sufficing without abandonment of its proper function: which is, to reflect faithfully the temper of an age as far as possible from being satisfied with itself. The literature which deals with the actualities of life, with the

"Quidquid agunt homines votum, timor, ira,
voluptas,
Gaudia discursus,"

must needs exhibit all those signs of discontent and unquiet which mark its era.

W. What? On the principle of the line, "Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat."

G. No. On the principle of the line, "He best can paint them who hath felt them most."

W. Felt them most? I am sure you can't mean oxen; for that would be to elevate every rib-puncher at a cattle show into a Paul Potter. May I take it that you were speaking not of oxen but of emotions?

G. You may. I wanted to show you that one quotation is only good as an argument until another is cited. My position however is a very simple, and, I think, an unassailable one. The everyday literature of a restless and discontented age will have its own undertone of restlessness and discontent just as the ordinary prose description of scenes of pain and horror must

itself be painful and horrible. Unrest, like any other form of human suffering, must be poetised before its representation ceases to partake of its own nature. Poetry, which conjures beauty and pleasure out of hideousness and anguish is alone capable of picturing agitation in forms of repose.

W. Hideousness is surely a little beyond the control of the poet.

G. Not at all. Let us imagine a modern newspaper rendering of a certain famous incident of antiquity which the poet and the sculptor have alike admirably dealt with, and compare their work with the reporter's. This is how the latter's account would probably have run:—"Shocking Death of a Father and two Sons.—Yesterday afternoon as our respected fellow-townsmen, Mr. —, was walking on the beach in company with his two sons, youths of fourteen and fifteen years of age respectively, he was startled by the apparition of two enormous snakes, who, emerging suddenly from the ocean, glided swiftly towards the lads, and proceeded with incredible rapidity to envelop them in their serpentine folds. Horrortruck at the sight, the father hurried to his sons' assistance, but only to be himself seized by the scaly monsters in a double coil, one round the middle and the other round the neck, while their heads, towering above their elder victim, presented a most appalling spectacle. The unfortunate man, whose clothes and hat were speedily covered with blood and slaver, strove in vain to loosen the folds which encircled him. His cries were terrible, and are compared by witnesses of the scene to the bellowings of a wounded bull. After having been engaged for a few minutes in their work of destruction the monsters retired, when the usual restoratives were at once applied to their victims, but the vital spark was in each case extinct." There you have the prose version of the death of Laocoon and his sons, and its effect, or, at any rate its effect upon my own mind is

one of mere disgust and disturbance. How does it strike you?

W. Certainly it has neither the beauty of the lines in the second *Æneid*, nor the repose of the group in the Vatican.

G. And yet it is a pretty close paraphrase of Virgil. Poetry therefore can exercise its transforming power not only over the painful but over the hideous, so that what, in the description of our imaginary penny-a-liner, appears as a mere confused and ignoble tussle, is not only elevated by her into grace and symmetry, but subdued into calm. But the tranquillising power of Poetry is no less than the beauty-giving power, her exclusive secret. I repeat that the prose literature of a restless and discontented age will have its own undertone of restlessness and discontent; and it would be unreasonable to expect that the men who provide us with this form of literature should find contentment in their work.

W. There is one class of modern prose writers who, concerned exclusively with actualities, would be more deeply imbued I should think than any other, with the spirit of their age. What should you say of the occupation of the journalist?

G. I should say that it was the most stimulating and animating that exists.

W. Indeed?

G. Why, of course. You know the guild of antiquity to whom they have been so truly compared. What can be more stimulating and animating than the work of making the worse appear the better reason? And our journalists pursue it with an impunity denied to their Hellenic ancestors. They ought to have as good a time of it as the Sophists before the appearance of Socrates.

W. Do you know, I begin to be horribly afraid that I have misunderstood you from the outset. It is most unfortunate.

G. Not at all. I have no doubt that it has greatly tended to moderate

the asperities of discussion. The value of misunderstandings for that purpose is not half appreciated. Yet to my mind it is one of the chief attractions of metaphysical controversy; for hence it is, that while grammarians, whose points of difference are not easily mistaken, have for generations been invoking the Divine vengeance upon each other's heads for their rival theories of the irregular verb, metaphysicians, on the other hand, have always dwelt together in the amity of the mutually unintelligible.

W. Still, even at the risk of disagreeing with you, I think I should like to understand you. I find it difficult to reconcile your favourable view of the journalist's occupation with what you had just said about prose writers in general. Surely this most "stimulating and animating employment" must be self-sufficing?

G. Every active employment of the faculties is so, during the period of their exercise.

W. But I thought you said it would be unreasonable to expect the modern prose writer to find contentment in his work.

G. Oh, I see now; it is one of the old pitfalls of the English language. May I talk Greek to you?

W. H'm—yes, in moderation.

G. It is not in my power to exceed it. When I spoke of "work" then, I did not mean *energeia* but *ergon*—not intellectual activity, but its results. And I certainly think that the *ergon* of the journalist, the end to which he devotes those energies, from the exercise of which he doubtless derives pleasure, is as little likely to afford him contentment as can well be imagined.

W. Perhaps so: if your comparison of him to the Sophist is a just one. But I have good reason, as you know, to protest against it.

G. Then, please consider it withdrawn. The Sophists were not only unscrupulous in boasting their ability to make the worse appear the better reason, but foolish as well. They

ought, like their intellectual heirs, to have begun business by seriously considering the question whether any one reason is better than another.

W. Well, let the journalists take care of themselves, and the rest of the prose writers, essayists, novelists, critics, into the bargain. I am eager to get on to the contradiction in which I think you have involved yourself.

G. And which is—?

W. Which is that the praise of self-sufficingness which you declared to belong exclusively to the work of the artist—by whom, of course I understood you to mean the pictorial and plastic artist—you are here extending to the poet also. For surely the poet, whose own art has the same power of reducing the discords and agitations of life to harmony and repose—he surely should share the painter's or the sculptor's peace of mind, and enjoy the same perfect contentment in his work.

G. And can you find any denial on my part that he should do so?

W. No denial that he should, but a pretty strong suggestion that he doesn't. Did not you confine the happy frame of mind we are speaking of to the painter and the sculptor?

G. I said they were almost the only men I had found to possess it, and to that I adhere. I do not think that the poet enjoys nearly as much immunity from the *maladie du siècle* as the artist. The world, I think, is much more "with him," in the sense of Wordsworth's sonnet, than it is with the painter or the sculptor.

W. And yet it was to the work of the brain and not of the hand that the catch-phrase of "art for art's sake" was first applied. That saying should have come only from men with whom the ideal was everything and the actual nothing.

G. Undoubtedly that is so; but "ought" and "is" are at their old quarrel again. "Art for art's sake" has come to have almost as little meaning in the mouths of many of our

poets as if it were a religious catch-word. I shall soon get to mistrust a man who talks about "art for art's sake" as much as I do men who tell me that they do such and such a thing for the love of God.

W. I cannot say that I altogether agree with you about the poets. Some of them, I think, have discredited the "art for art's sake" formula in quite a different way.

G. Oh, you mean by treating it as a declaration of war against morality? Why, yes, there are undoubtedly a certain number of our younger poets who seem to think that art, in ceasing to be didactic, is bound to become licentious, just as one often finds a clerical person talking loosely to prove himself a man of the world. Some of our modern poetry is no more an example of the poetic art pursued for its own sake than some of our theatrical performances are examples of the choregraphic art as practised in the same disinterested spirit. Both the bard and the ballet-girl are simply bent upon the exhibition of what ought to be concealed.

W. I was not thinking of that, however. This formula is also discredited in another equally distinct, though somewhat more innocent, way. "Art for art's sake," among our younger poets, might often be paraphrased as "carving cherry-stones for the sake of the carving." The question in my mind as to much of their work is whether "its own sake" is a thing worth making sacrifices for. To do such work solely for its own intrinsic value appears to me to be carrying disinterestedness to the point of Quixotism. What are some of our latter-day sonnets? Exquisitely painted miniatures of a fly in amber. Quite exquisitely painted, I allow, but when you have said that, you have said all.

G. A sonnet, I believe, should contain but a single thought.

W. Some of these, then, are one short of their full complement of ideas. But, if the sonnet is to have but one thought, that thought should

at least be big enough to fill it. Why compel us to unwrap fourteen folds of a curiously-wrought tissue, only to find a seed-pearl inside?

G. Is it always a seed-pearl, moreover? To my mind it is sometimes as worthless as it is minute. Do you remember that admirably acute contrast drawn by Coleridge between the "conceitists" of the seventeenth century and our more recent versifiers: "the former," he says, "conveying the most fantastic thoughts in the most correct and natural language, the other in the most fantastic language conveying the most trivial thoughts"?

W. Yes, I recollect; and he is as severe elsewhere on the obscurity of the language as he is on the poverty of the idea. There is great wit in his remark that certain modern works are "as trivial in thought, and yet enigmatic in expression, as if Echo and Sphinx had laid their heads together to compose them."

G. However, that makes the art perhaps a little more disinterested. The self-contemplative element in poetry is certainly complete when the poet holds his meaning as something too sacred for any eye but his own.

W. Well, so far, it seems, we are pretty well agreed; but you do not yet seem to me to have altogether justified your original charge against the modern bard. Valueless though this "*Kunst an und für sich*," as the dear old lumbering Germans have it, may be, I see nothing to show that it is not a genuine thing as far as it goes. Genuineness, however, is the very quality which I understand you to deny to it. You are not ready to admit that the poet's work is really felt by him to be as self-sufficing as the painter feels his to be, or that the poet is as often content as the painter with single-minded service to the spirit of beauty. Is it not so?

G. I certainly do not admit that; and it would argue considerable assurance on the poet's part for him to expect me to do so. Nothing can be less single-minded, or more obviously

the contrary, than what you call his "service to the spirit of beauty."

W. Well, I hardly know about "obviously the contrary."

G. What? Not when the manners of the devotee are like nothing so much as those of a Spanish coquette, in that great trysting-place of intrigue the cathedral? Our poets make a show of kneeling before the altar, but they can no more keep their thoughts upon their worship than the donna can keep her eyes upon her breviary. Poetry is perpetually ogling some one or another from behind her fan.

W. I think the comparison between the two cases is hardly a just one. Poetry, you know, is supposed to concern herself with all forms of life.

G. And prayer to take account of all sorts and conditions of men. Perhaps that is why the young woman in the mantilla has so appreciative an eye for every bearded face among those around her. It may be that she has not apprehended the philological distinction between *homo* and *vir*.

W. Pray be serious. Your analogy between religious worship and the æsthetic cult is surely a misleading one. In the one case, devotion implies abstraction; in the other case, so far from implying, it almost excludes it. He surely is the greatest poet who is in the closest and most constant contact with actualities, idealising them wherever he touches them. It is as though your Spanish coquette—

G. Stay! I renounce the Spanish coquette. I divorce her before she has time to betray me, as I see you are about to induce her to do. Metaphors are something far more dangerous than double-edged and unhafted knives. They are women who desert you at a moment's notice for another lover.

W. Well, dropping metaphors, I repeat that you do not substantiate your charge against poets of deficient devotion to the ideal by merely noting the variety of their interests in the real.

G. You have misunderstood me. I did

not mean to complain of the catholicity of the poet's interest in the general concerns of humanity. That would have been perverse indeed. Let him, with all my heart, idealise as many forms of human action, thought, emotion as he can bring under the magic of his art. But let him deal with life as one whose main business is with the phenomena of this world, and not with the uncertainties of that, if any, which is to come.

W. Now, indeed, you astonish me. I had supposed it to be the chief boast of the modern poet that he makes the phenomena of this world his sole concern.

G. So it is: and that is his worst sign of weakness. If he really did what he boasts of doing we should hear a good deal less of his boastings than we do. The wise man, says a true philosophic aphorism, "*De nullâ re minus quam de morte cogitat.*" What, pray, should we think of his wisdom and fortitude if he showed us that he was always thinking about death by incessantly protesting that he has no fear of it? Yet this is the invariable burden of one half of the modern poet's utterances.

W. Hardly in so many words.

G. Hardly in so few words, you mean. He requires a good many more words than other people to express anything. But surely, my dear Warnford, you must admit that this, in one form or another, is his incessant song. Can the man describe you a rose without adding that it will fade, and that *he* for one doesn't care? Can he praise the beauty of Helen without hastening to remind you that even to her it was appointed to die, and that death, in stripping the flesh of a woman from her bones, "greatly alters her," as Swift grimly puts it, "for the worse." All this perpetual dwelling upon mortality—so very old a grievance as it is—is surely a sign of weakness.

W. Death, however, is a great fact, the most impressive that we know of. You must expect the poet to have

much to say about it, and to be more deeply moved by it than other men.

G. Moved by it in what way? With a sense of awe and a summons to fortitude? My complaint against them is that they are agitated instead of solemnised by the thought of death, and that their perpetual bravado of indifference to it shows that mortality, instead of being compelled, like every other subject of contemplation, to subserve their immortal art, is simply distracting and distorting it. Their poetry in fact becomes one prolonged whistle of the school-boy who has to pass through the churchyard after dark.

W. Still I think that it is demanding too much of art to expect it to dignify the attitude of a man towards the awful mysteries of his lot on earth.

G. Too much! Why, I had supposed that that was the very function which it claimed to have taken over from Philosophy and Religion. And yet now you would find excuses for the failure of Poetry, the greatest of the arts, to fulfil it. She lies forsooth under some natural disability to execute her promises of spiritual redemption, and is actually to be allowed to plead that disability two thousand years after the death of Lucretius. Will you tell me that Lucretius failed in what you say Poetry cannot be expected to accomplish? or will you evade the difficulty by crediting Philosophy with her success?

W. Well, I must say that I think the second explanation at least an arguable one.

G. Do you? Then read the third book of the *De Rerum Naturâ* after reading a prose summary of the Epicurean doctrines, and ask yourself whether it is philosophy or art, speculative conviction or poetic feeling, to which those lines upon annihilation owe their majestic calm.

W. My own belief is that Christianity has for ever deprived man of the power of finding peace in the poetic contemplation of nature as

divorced from some form or other of religious aspiration. Yes, I know what you are about to say. I can almost see the name of Wordsworth on your lips. But surely you cannot hold that his mysticism—purely Pantheistic as it seems to be in form—is unindebted, is anything indeed but a very large debtor, to his religious beliefs.

G. Then let modern Poetry make her humble apologies to Religion, and confess either to gross imposture or flagrant self-delusion in pretending to have succeeded to her authority over the human spirit.

W. She might add, by way of excuse for the mistake, that in believing herself-capable of superseding Religion, she had by some strange oversight forgotten the unfortunate death of Pan.

G. Yes, and that her attempts to revive the ancient Pantheon had only led to a rehabilitation of the worship of Venus in poetic forms as destitute of the element of masculinity as were the rites of the Bona Dea.

W. You are determined, I see, to bring me round to your admired artists at last. After all, though, I am a little surprised that your abstract views of the dignity and elevation of the artistic life in the abstract should have survived any large acquaintance—if you have had it—with artists in the flesh. For my part, I have found as much petty vanity, jealousy, and affectation among these people, as in any body of men, with, of course, the exception of actors. The actor is, as we all know, the incarnation of the two former of these failings, and probably would not succeed in his profession if he were not.

G. Affectation is to be found among artists as everywhere else; but you must be on your guard against unjustly overrating its amount. There is a danger lest you fallaciously confuse the teacher with his disciples. Many an artistic style, to our thinking grotesque and unlovely in itself, and made additionally ridiculous by the insincere raptures of pretended con-

noisseurs, is practised by the artist himself in a spirit of humble and single-minded apostleship. The levity and shallowness of the congregation should not be permitted to discredit the piety of the priesthood. As to the jealousy and vanity of artists—why they are not exempt, of course, from human weaknesses; but I assure you that I have found less of these two vices among them than among any class of men I know. And this might naturally be expected if, as I believe, they have a purer and more undistracted devotion to the work of their lives, a more perfect contentment in it, a fuller and more unwavering faith in the sufficiency of its results. These are the feelings which exclude vanity and jealousy, and with these I am disposed to credit artists as a class.

W. The artist life should certainly be apt to confirm the mind in that grave and manly attitude which is the most antagonistic to the indulgence of feminine foibles. It is as contemplative as the angler's, without his tendency to aimless dreaming, while the mental activity necessary to its pursuit is, unlike that of the man of letters, protected from aggravation into restlessness by the steady demand upon the physical faculties of attention. Yes, if a healthy balance between the energies of the body and the mind can insure happiness, the artist should be happy.

G. I know a score of them who are. One I am thinking of in particular, to whom every day bringing with it its allotted portion of toil brings also something more than the mechanic contentment which waits everywhere upon faithful and industrious labour—brings, I mean, a sensible addition to the stored delight of life. The sunrise finds him at his easel: before the birds are in full chorus he is at his work. And yet though he often only lays aside his brush and palette with the nightfall, he finds abundant time to freshen his blood with exercise and to unfix his thoughts among his play-

mate children or in cheerful converse with his friends. Never is this man haunted, like so many of us, by questionings of the real value of all human effort. That spectre, "What is the good of it?" has been "laid" in his heart for ever.

W. Are you sure you are still observant of your own distinction between the *energeia* and the *ergon*? Is it in the doing of the work or in the work itself that he finds such perpetual satisfaction?

G. In both: but whereas the delight of creation is of course but transitory, the delight in the created thing is a joy for ever. It seems to be a source of pure and quiet rejoicing to him to have, with every fresh completed picture, added something to the treasury of material beauty in the world.

W. You will think me brutal to ask so earthly a question about such sublimated work, but does it add nothing to any other treasury, that you should deem it so wholly disinterested?

G. Nothing, or almost nothing. His love for the art which he has wedded has given the best proofs of its unworldly purity; for she came to him, and has remained with him, a portionless bride. His studio is an involuntary gallery—a museum of unappreciated treasures. The homage of a few admirers has found its way thither, but neither the applause of the public nor the money of the dealer. Nor do I think it very likely that in my friend's lifetime they ever will.

W. But does he not regret it?

G. He is quite above the affectation of pretending the contrary. He would, of course, be glad to know that the works which have given so much pleasure to himself could diffuse it also among hundreds of thousands of his fellow-men. But he shows no discontent with his lot as it is. He labours and will labour on without bitterness and without discouragement, adding yearly to this storehouse of the invaluable and unsaleable until he dies.

W. But in the meantime how does

he live? Is the pot set boiling by sheer glow of enthusiasm?

G. No, in the usual way. He can paint if he chooses, paint what the public will buy, and he takes no false shame in doing the work that he must in order to enable himself to do the work that he would. But he never thinks of converting a means of subsistence into a means of amassing wealth. And those who love him love him too well to urge it.

W. And you think this paragon a fair type of the ordinary artist?

G. No more than you think that a fair question. Such men I know are not common anywhere, but my personal belief is that they are less infrequently met with among artists than in any other class; and it is this belief which led me—since I see no reason for imagining artists to be naturally men of more elevated aims than other people—to the theory that they draw more abiding tranquillity and contentment than men of letters, for instance, from their ideals.

W. How any man can look round upon the acres of pot-boiling babies in an art exhibition, and talk as you do passes my comprehension. But in the suggestion you seem to make that men of letters are incapable of surrendering material advancement for the prosecution of a high intellectual purpose, you are surely guilty of gross injustice.

G. The suggestion is not mine, and therefore the injustice is yours. I know that there are men of that stamp in the profession of literature, as in every other in the world. But you must yourself see, I think, that the temptation, to sacrifice your high intellectual purpose has never borne so strongly upon men of letters, or has been so much yielded to as in this luxurious and money-loving age. You must know how freely the old formula of the student is nowadays reversed, and how many men find "high living and plain thinking" a far more satisfactory ideal. Have you not yourself noticed how the all-devouring monster

of Fleet Street is yearly adding to his consumption of—

W. Stop! I beg of you. I must not hear my master spoken of in these terms. Besides, you are quite mistaken in supposing that any of those who take service in journalism have surrendered one jot of their literary ideals.

G. No?

W. I assure you, no. Believe me, they are every one of them in the same case as your friend, the artist. They only do the work that they must, in order to enable themselves to do the work that they would. There is not one of them who writes a single line more for the newspapers than is necessary to earn him a bare subsistence, and supply him with the wherewithal to live until he completes the *opus magnum*—the epoch-making work upon which every journalist is engaged. You talk of your artist's studio as an involuntary gallery. I know many a writer whose study is an undesigned

waste-paper shop. I have a literary colleague, whose chief recreation it is to stack and re-stack the unsold copies of his works, as a child amuses itself with a "box of bricks." He takes as much delight in the sight of his creations as does your artist friend. He is as satisfied with contemplating the backs of his books as the public itself is; and to paraphrase your own words, "it seems to be a source of pure and quiet rejoicing to him to have with every fresh completed volume added something to that treasury of intellectual beauty," which—which—well, upon which no one seems to have the slightest inclination to draw bills. But you smile; I half believe you suspect me of irony, and as I should give the greatest offence to many excellent persons if my words were not taken as serious, I must, as a mere measure of self-protection, bid you good morning.

H. D. T.

IN A GREEK FAMILY TO-DAY.

It was not on account of the earthquake that we chose Chios for a visit; in fact, if we had thought twice about that catastrophe we should certainly have not gone there, for the ruins led us into frequent difficulties. Nor was it on account of the far-famed beauty of the island—its orange and lemon groves—nor on account of the mastic-trees, from which the Chiotes supply the inmates of every harem in Turkey with gum to masticate; but simply because we were told that by riding on muleback for two days over the Chiote mountains to a certain distant village called Pyrgi we could there plunge ourselves into the depths of a population of Greeks of the ancient Ionian type, whose manners and customs would remind us of many things we had read of the Greeks of old, and whose hospitality was proverbial.

We rode accordingly for two weary days through the country devastated by the earthquake; we chewed the mastic, and we sniffed the air burdened with the fragrance of orange and lemon blossom. Most visitors to Chios would have been content, and considered they knew the island well, our work had not as yet begun. The mountain paths were rugged and fatiguing, yet our beasts were sure-footed, and we had now got out of the region of ruined villages and sickly reminiscences of the great disaster.

The southern villages of Chios are like round fortresses; they have no walls properly so called, but the backs of the houses join all round and offer a circular line of fortification. The doors of these houses open into a street which encircles the town inside. There are generally four entrances to the town by archways under the houses, the iron gates of which are

closed at night. Numerous narrow streets converge towards the centre like the spokes of a wheel, many of them being covered over so as to afford a means of progression on the roof from house to house. The centre of the wheel is a large square (*πλατεία*) with a tower in the middle dating from the days of the Genoese occupation, the lower story of which is generally the fashionable café, whilst the upper one is entered only by a ladder and forms the acropolis of the place in time of local disturbances, from which vantage-ground the soldiers can command nearly every house in the village. These fortress villages are generally some little distance from the sea, and are remnants of the old days when pirates haunted the coasts.

Such was the village of Pyrgi which we were about to visit. It was a relief to find that our friend's house looked into the square, and not into the dingy, dark street by which we had entered. We alighted from our mules in front of the café, and then ascended a dark wooden staircase to be introduced to our host and hostess.

The latter was a stout, busy woman, scantily clad, without shoes or stockings; she had on a white cotton skirt, while over this was a blue jacket, gauged behind and frilled at the edge. She had on a white head-dress twisted in folds, and a streamer hanging down behind. Her name was *Κυρία Κυριακή*, which, being translated, means Mrs. Sunday. She had large, brown, almond-shaped eyes, she had exquisitely-pencilled eyebrows, a sallow, almost swarthy, complexion, and a profile as Grecian as ever was seen on any vase. She greeted us with effusion, apologising, as women will, for her

négligé attire, and busied herself to prepare for our reception.

Mrs. Sunday was the mother of a numerous offspring. The eldest daughter, aged about fifteen, and growing up the image of her mother, was named Παρκενή (Friday). The names of the others did not excite any curiosity except that of the baby, which reposed in a cradle made of a goatskin on a framework of cane. They called it Dragon, and on inquiry I was told that it was the custom to call male babies Dragon or Iron, or some such name, until they were baptised, prophetically alluding to their prospective strength, and that Master Dragon was soon to become Master Palamedes.

After a few minutes our host and a few friends dropped in. He was a regular islander, with his baggy trousers, his loose embroidered waistcoat, and his fez. He carried a gourd in his hand full of wine, some of which he spilt as a libation (*σπονδή*), just as if he were an ancient Greek who wished to propitiate *Zeûs ξένιος*. Then we all raised the gourd to our lips in turn, saying, "We have found you well," and other compliments which flow like water in these parts. Our host expressed his delight at the honour we had done him in visiting his roof, and told us that a table should be spread for us later on, after which he would have the pleasure of questioning us about our wanderings. Until the *τράπεζα* is laid and justice has been done to the viands it is now, as in ancient times, a breach of hospitality to question a guest.

I was left alone now for a while, much to my relief. I wanted a few minutes of privacy to recover from the journey, and to peep around and investigate our quarters.

I was sitting on a sort of dais, raised from the rest of the room by a step eighteen inches high. Around this ran the divan, and looking into the square were five narrow windows, with no glass in them, but a carved rail in front. These windows were closed

by wooden shutters at night, and above each was a round hole with glass in, through which the light could penetrate when the shutters were shut. The room was panelled along the window side, a row of plates was arranged on a shelf along the wall, quite primitively æsthetic in its design; a lot of pictures with a lamp burning before them formed the little family altar. A curiously-plaited thing of corn-ears, the sacred *σῖλος*, was hung near as a thank-offering to the Madonna for the last harvest, in her capacity as successor to Demeter.

As yet we had seen no beds, and were aware of the existence of plenty of vermin hopping about on the dirty wooden floor. Our hearts misgave us.

After about a quarter of an hour Mrs. Sunday reappeared, carrying a tray, on which was a pot of sweetmeat and two glasses of water. We took a teaspoonful of the sweetmeat, drank a little water, and this meal was over. They are great lovers of sweet things in these parts. They make them of rose leaves, orange and lemon flowers, mastic, and all sorts of strange things, but the best of all is the *lemonaki*, made of lemons no bigger than walnuts, so plentiful is this fruit in Chios. A large assortment of these *γλυκίσματα* is the great pride of the island housewife.

We were left for half-an-hour's repose, and Mrs. Sunday then returned again with small cups of Turkish coffee and pieces of *loukoum*. This time she was accompanied by various members of her family; the girls wore a curious headgear peculiar to the place, being a sort of loose embroidered cap, with ends or tassels hanging down, after the fashion of a clown's, and their hair, which was cut short at the side, protruded on their cheeks like whiskers. Their dress was all in one piece, with holes for their arms, and gauged all down the back; a belt was worn round their waists, and their feet were bare. They hid shyly behind their mother as she served the coffee, and seemed

aghast when we wished them good-day. The boys were somewhat more brazen; they each wore little caps like bowls stuck on the back of their heads, and their hair stood out straight, which gave them a wild and somewhat wicked appearance. They had on the inevitable wide trousers, which flapped about between their legs like the stomach of a goose.

Mrs. Sunday showed a mother's pleasure at the notice I took of her offspring. I captured, with some trouble, young Miss Hadriana, and submitted her to a closer inspection.

"What is this?" I asked, pointing to some wretched trinkets tied round her neck.

"To ward off the evil eye" (*Βασκαρεία*), rejoined her mother; and this suggested a conversation which detained Mrs. Sunday nearly an hour with us.

"It prevents her from being withered by the glance of the Nereids," firmly ejaculated our hostess, as a suspicion of scepticism flitted across our faces; and she grew mysteriously confiding as she told us the following local superstition:—

"When a babe sickens, and no medicine can cure it, we say it is struck by the Nereids, who dance in the bed of the dry river yonder, close to the church of the Appearance of the Virgin. Woe to them who see them dance! Not many years ago, when a babe sickened in this way, it was the custom to strip it of its clothes, and leave it all night on the marble altar of the church; if the babe survived, it was a proof that it had not been struck by the Nereids, and generally recovered its proper health. But the infidel authorities have put a stop to this. May the Nereids strike them, and their false prophet!"

Mrs. Sunday was evidently an implicit believer in mystic phenomena, so I questioned her further about charms and healing roots. Out of a cupboard in the wall she produced a bit of root.

"This," she said, triumphantly,

"is the most valuable medicine I possess; it cures every illness we have. We call it the *phystoula* root," she added, "and it is both difficult and dangerous to get; it holds very firm to the ground, and, when rooted up, utters a cry like a baby; the person who pulls it up is sure to die. Some tie the root by a rope to a mule, and then the animal pulls it up, and dies."

It was quite dark before the table was spread for our meal, and when served it was more curious than sumptuous; the water, in which a kid had been boiled with some rice in it, led the way as soup, and was followed by pickled cuttle fish, very hard and unpalatable, but a prized luxury in these islands, especially during Lent—so much so, that it would pay the enterprise of pickling the many thousands we throw away in disgust to send out here. Then came the kid, a deliciously tender little thing, one of a litter of six, our host informed us. After the kid came the *misethra*, a standard dish in the Grecian islands, made of curdled milk. I have tasted exactly the same in Corsica, under the name of *broccio*, and I always revel in it. There was a Turkish dish of rice and sour milk, called *pilaff* and *yaourte*, and which I had considerable difficulty in getting rid of; figs and almonds brought the repast to a close. The wine was rich and excessively sweet, such as, I presume, once was the nectar of the gods.

The table was laid for four, ourselves, our host, and his brother. Mrs. Sunday and her family waited upon us; occasionally she sat down respectfully in a corner, with a bone which she gnawed; but when all was cleared away, and the men began to smoke, she drew her chair up to the table, took occasional sips out of her husband's glass, and became talkative.

Now all restraint was at an end, and questions about England and the far west occupied more time than I cared to devote to them. Every Greek adores the name of Mr. Gladstone, and I went up considerably in our

host's estimation when I told him I had been at Oxford. "Then you are a schoolfellow of Mr. Gladstone's?" To this novel way of looking at the question I deemed it wise to assent.

By degrees I drew them on to talk about themselves and their customs—a line of conversation far more interesting to me. I wished to gather information about the growth of the grape.

"Did they have a grand ceremony as in Italy at the vintage season?"

"Not much," was the reply, after a pause.

Presently, however, our host told us that when a man wished to plant a vineyard near Pyrgi, he would call together fifty or more men, according to the size of the vineyard he proposed to plant, on a feast day at the church door. Each of these he would provide with a spade, and he would slaughter goats, and fill skins with wine. Next morning the troop would start out to work, singing songs, and preceded by a standard bearer holding a white banner. They would eat the goats and drink the wine after the planting of the vines, which, according to custom, must all be done in one day, and they would return home in the evening singing and shouting more lustily than when they went. Surely this is very akin to a feast of Bacchus!

"Sing us one of your Chiote songs," I asked our host. He was nothing loth to do this, and his wife gave him the key-note by striking a knife on a brass dish. The tune was monotonous, and of the words I could only catch the refrain, which was, "Forty-five lemon trees planted by the way." And I felt it must be a purely Chiote song judging by the quantities of lemons we had passed through in the Kampos.

Attracted by the sound of revelry the neighbours now dropped in one by one, ostensibly to chat with our host, but really to scrutinise the foreigners. The priest, of course, led the way, and very stately he looked in his tall hat

and long robe as he seated himself in a corner, stroked his white beard, and settled himself to look on. The local authorities (the Demogerontes) were formally introduced to us as they walked in, and each was handed a glass of wine; other local magnates followed, and the feast waxed merry. Despite their poverty, Turkish oppression, and earthquakes, the Greeks of Chios can still be merry when they please. Our host laughed, and cracked jokes with everybody; he told his experiences by sea and land, on mountain and plain. Perhaps his bow was a little long, especially when talking of sport. I had seen no game in Chios, and I doubted whether he ever had.

A propos of sport, the priest put rather a good riddle to the company. I got our host to write it down for me in my note-book, and the following is the translation:—

"I live on all sorts of sport, yet I never go up to the mountain forests.

I weave nets, and I set them, yet I am not a fisherman.

I am found with the poor, yet I am by no means a pauper.

And with the offspring of poverty I provide dinner for my belly."

Most of those present knew the answer, and all eyes were turned upon me, as if to test the ability of a schoolfellow of Mr. Gladstone's. With shame I confess that I had to be told that the answer was a spider; on thinking it over coolly next day I wondered at my stupidity.

After a while I delicately inquired if they ever danced in Chios. "Not often now," they said, somewhat sadly; "since the earthquakes we have had no spirit for it." I gently pressed the subject. "I should like to see some of your steps." They looked from one to the other, smiled, and at length hesitatingly consented.

There were plenty of men in the room already, so our host was despatched in all haste to secure partners for them all, whilst Mrs. Sunday, at my special request, took her eldest

daughter into an adjoining room, and decked her in the holiday attire peculiar to Pyrgi. I have seldom seen anybody look smarter than Miss Friday when she walked in; her scarlet stomacher was beautifully decorated with gold, her jacket was of the same pattern as her mother's everyday one of blue, but it was of yellow silk; from her head came the *manthelion*, a fairy-like thing of light silk hanging down to her heels behind; on her head was a garland of artificial flowers, and the whole was kept on by beautiful silver pins; her hair hung over her breast in two long plaits. She had on a stiff white petticoat, and an apron of crimson, with gold roses embroidered on it. These dresses the Chiotess wear on grand gala days when they dance on the village green, and it was a mark of the greatest condescension on Mrs. Sunday's part to allow of its being seen to-night.

I should like to have seen the whole company when dressed like this, but unfortunately they only came in their everyday clothes. Nevertheless they looked excessively quaint, each with her hair cut short and brought on to her cheek like whiskers, and the men too with their baggy trousers like divided skirts, which wobbled about oddly as they capered to and fro.

They treated us to several dances to the tune of the phlogera, a sort of bagpipe; but as yet they had danced nothing which I had not seen in other parts of Greece. Before closing the entertainment a singing dance was suggested, and, as it was the first I had ever seen, I was deeply interested. The dancers stand in a circle. Each man has a woman on his right hand for his partner, so that every young man has an old woman, and every old man a young woman. They join hands, and dance round slowly in a circle, and the one who is styled the leader begins to sing. At the end of four or five lines he mentions the second dancer by name, who forthwith kisses his partner and then begins to

sing; then he mentions the third dancer, who likewise kisses and sings: and so on all round the circle till all have had their song and their kiss. When it comes to the leader again he takes his kiss, but does not continue to sing. Peals of laughter greeted each kiss; it was now obvious to us why the partners were so curiously chosen.

It was getting very late, past eleven, and as yet we had seen no signs of bed or the abatement of the feast. Perhaps we yawned, perhaps our host himself felt sleepy, but greatly to our relief all the guests suddenly took their departure, bidding each of us a hearty *καλή νύκτα*. The priest alone sat on as a privileged person; he never spoke, but seemed deeply interested in the unpacking of our meagre stock of luggage. Mrs. Sunday and her daughters were very busy now. First of all they cleared away the table and the dishes, then they dragged in a large mattress which was spread on the floor, clean white sheets and pillowcases were next fetched out of a cupboard and spread on the mattress. Over all was cast a quilt rich in its many-coloured embroidery. All was ready now. So our host and hostess bade us good-night and soft repose, and departed; but not so the priest, who lingered on stroking his white beard as if reluctant to leave so interesting a sight. We partially undressed with the vain hope of shocking him. Nothing would drive him away till twelve o'clock struck, when he hastily left us with his blessing to retire privately to rest, or rather a mockery of rest, for "those black-faced mules, all blood and skin," as the Chiotess call them, found us excellent hunting grounds.

Before we were out of bed in the morning, snatching a few of those winks of which the exigencies of our nocturnal chase had deprived us, Mrs. Sunday's little family began to peer into our room; first a head, then shoulders, then a body, then another body, and we awoke to the knowledge that four little human beings were contemplating our repose. It availed little

driving away the urchins and closing the door. Before we had time to become what we considered presentable, in walked the old priest with his blessing, and took up his position again on his chair. Mrs. Sunday quickly followed him, bringing in a tray with little cups of coffee thereon, and our life of publicity began.

All ablutions had perforce to be performed at a public tap outside. These taps are regular family institutions in Chios; they are generally rudely decorated with a carved marble slab covered with quaint devices, and here all the washing that the family requires is performed. Soap is plentiful enough here, being a local product, and is made out of the refuse of the olives with soda added. The Greeks are very superstitious about soap; they will not pass a piece from one to the other, it is sure to provoke a quarrel. Likewise olive oil is looked upon in the same light as salt with us—to spill it is most unlucky.

When we were dressed and our coffee was finished, our host volunteered his services as cicerone. Our plan was to visit the objects of interest in Pyrgi before a stout lunch at eleven, and after that to devote our time to inspecting the immediate neighbourhood of the place. So we left Mrs. Sunday spinning away. Her wheel was a simple one, being nothing but a framework of cane stuck into a stone to keep it up, and as she twirled her spindle, and wished us a good expedition, one might have thought she had walked straight out of the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* for our benefit.

The parish church of Pyrgi is nothing much to look at outside. Yet within the wood carving is excellent, as indeed it is universally in these island churches. There is the everlasting tempelon, a sort of rood screen of wood which shut off the holy of holies from the vulgar gaze. This is usually a labyrinth of carving, biblical subjects let in in panels, and wreaths of flowers around them. Carving in minute detail is quite a specialty

here, and numerous crosses were for sale, the minuteness of the work on which was almost painful. The pulpit too at Pyrgi is a grand work of carving, as is also the *προσκυνητήριον* where the picture of the patron saint, *St. Ballast of the People*, is exposed to be kissed by the faithful. The gallery is a curious contrast to these works of art, being constructed of alternate panels of brilliant red and green. Outside the entrance stood rows of chimney pots with what seemed to be miniature gibbets over them. We were informed that they were tombs over which no grave-stone is put, but incense is kept continually burning inside the chimney-pots, suspended in little lamps from the gibbets.

Down a dark entrance I was next taken to visit one of the most exquisite little Byzantine churches I had ever seen, numerous as these are over the old Grecian empire, at Constantinople, Athens, and elsewhere. I don't think any pleased me more than this church at Pyrgi. It is entirely shut in by houses, and buried in a luxuriant garden. The red bricks have assumed a rich mellow tint; the tooth patterns and intricate designs in brick are more than usually elaborate, and around the dome old Rhodian plates, let into the bricks, form an exceedingly rich decoration. The windows are narrow, and the patterns wander on carrying your eye into a deep recess where is a strip of glass scarcely a foot wide. The exterior is like a rich autumn leaf in colouring, or a bit of mediæval tapestry. Inside the dome is covered with frescoes blackened by age and dirt. The Turks made a stable of it during the revolution, and it appears scarcely to have been cleaned since.

From the churches our host took us to inspect an olive oil factory of which there are several in Pyrgi, so that the stream which waters the village is brown with olive juice, like water tinged by peat in an Irish bog. Here they use no machinery or modern

appliances in pressing the oil, merely the old primitive wooden press. Women, or sometimes mules, walk round and round revolving a wheel which crushes the olives; in this condition they put them into sacks and then into that "black-faced heifer which devours oakwood," as the Chiotēs in their figurative way are wont to describe their ovens. The sacks are then placed one over the other in the press, and two men turn a post which pulls a rope, which drags a stick, which tightens the press, and the oil oozes into the receptacle prepared for it, with water inside. The oil and water of course do not amalgamate, the dregs sink to the bottom, and the pure oil flows into jars prepared for it.

It is impossible to realise the affection people have for olives in a purely olive-growing country. "An olive with a kernel gives a boot to a man," is a true adage with them. It is the principal fattening and sustaining food in a country where hardly any meat is eaten. It takes the place of the potato in Ireland, and on the olive crop depends the welfare of many. An olive yard is presented to the church by way of glebe, and the peasants collect on a stated day to gather these sacred olives, which they buy from the church, and always at the highest market value.

The other objects we visited in Pyrgi did not interest us much. The streets are narrow and dark, and the inhabitants squalid. Moreover, we never could get it out of our heads that they were wicked; the women with the clowns' caps and bushy whiskers, I think uniformly gave us that impression. We went to the school and saw the female youth of Chios occupied in learning western crochet, instead of eastern embroidery as their mothers had done, and then we went to see several women weaving rugs of striped colours in their looms, here called an *ἀργαλέον*, just as in ancient days Homer used the word to express anything hard to do.

At eleven we fed off the remains of our last night's repast. During the progress of our meal I heard some curious monotonous singing in the square, so I hastened to the window to see what it was. Some children were going from door to door singing a low dirge like the Breton storyteller who goes from fair to fair with his banner to illustrate the incidents of his song. One boy carried a long cane in his hand, on the top of which was perched a rude wooden bird which was moved to and fro in a supplicating fashion by means of a thread inside the cane. "These children," explained our host, "are having their swallow feast (*χειλιδόνισμα*) to-day. Every spring when the first swallow has been seen the children claim a half holiday at Pyrgi; in some towns it is the 1st of March, and then they go round and beg for alms."

One boy carried a basket which was nearly full of eggs, another had a basketful of bread, another of olives, and as they went from door to door I caught the first line of their song, nothing more—"The swallow has come from the dark sea," and the rest was lost to me. Some weeks later on Palm Sunday I heard some children singing in a similar strain; this time a girl carried a doll dressed as a bride, and some wallflowers in her hair. Their song was equally monotonous, and reminded me strongly of what must have been a chorus in an old Greek play. The doll was waved in their arms from side to side, and their baskets were filled by the neighbours. I made the leading girl repeat slowly to me her words, and found that the doll was supposed to represent Lazarus, and that the words formed a sacred song, and ran as follows—"Then Christ weeps, and makes Hades to tremble as He says, 'Hades, Tartarus, and Charon, I demand Lazarus of you.'" No wonder ancient customs and ancient mythology are wonderfully blended with the new.

After lunch Mrs. Sunday showed us her linen cupboard full of things

woven by herself and her female ancestors. Some of her rugs in stripes of colour made us eager to possess, but she was our hostess, we could not summon up courage to make her an offer for her goods; then she had some pretty red and blue towels edged with home made Greek lace, which struck us with such admiration that Mrs. Sunday was generous enough to present us with a pair. We felt almost as much embarrassed as if we had asked for them, and cast over our few possessions in our minds to find an equivalent to give her. Nothing presented itself as likely except a case of English needles, which were received with raptures. Wherever we went we found English needles appreciated, and they are the most portable and most valued "beads for the natives" that can be found.

We were quite attached to Mrs. Sunday by this time, yet we could see she had a temper of her own which kept her numerous progeny in great awe. She was, as the Chioters say, "Pinks to strangers, thistles to her friends." We saw her under both aspects, and enjoyed her as a pink excessively. Talking of pinks, we saw several dried ones in Mrs. Sunday's linen cupboard, which we imagined were intended to act the part of lavender and make the linen fragrant. — "Not at all," laughed she; "it is to preserve it from the rats."

"Good gracious," we replied, "this is a use for pinks of which we have never heard."

Mrs. Sunday assumed then a solemn air and continued: "On St. Basil's day put three pinks into your breast when you go to liturgy. On returning home take them out and cast one on the boards of your house so that it may fall to pieces, and you will be lucky for a year. Eat another with your household, and no sickness will come nigh your dwelling for a year. Put the third into your cupboard and for a year it will be free from the visitation of rats and mice."

It was quite a hot afternoon when

we went out to inspect the environs of the town with our host. The year was yet young, but the sun had a great deal of power. The mastic groves were excessively uninteresting — low dark green shrubs covered with a red powdery sort of flower; the stems bore evidence of the use of the knife, but August is the month for tapping. Both as regards scent and taste we had already acquired a disgust for mastic, and were glad to turn into a field where two bullocks were drawing a plough of primitive construction probably differing in no way from the ploughs which Homer would have seen if he had not been blind. It was formed of a young tree with two branches proceeding from the trunk in opposite directions. The trunk served as the pole, one branch stood up and served as the tail, the other had a bit of iron fixed into it, and penetrated the ground.

The country around Pyrgi has no pretensions to beauty, as I have already stated. Low brown volcanic hills surround green valleys; hardly a tree, save the mastic, the olive, and the fig. From every eminence the sea is visible, dotted with islands. There is Psara quite close, the barren island of fishermen which fought so well for Greek independence; but owing to its geographical position amongst the Sporades, Psara was obliged to see the success her bravery had gained for others, and fall back itself into slavery. There are the rocky mountains of the north of Chios full of rich mineral treasures—manganese, borresite, &c.,—as our host explained, yet somehow the environs of Pyrgi did not please us much, and we were not sorry when rain came on which obliged us to join Mrs. Sunday once more.

Rain in spring is plentiful in the Sporades just as the warm weather commences, and winds, too, howl amongst them in the spring time with terrific violence. The sailors along the coast call each wind by its Italian name, but inland and up in the mountains Boreas the king of

winds still rules under his ancient name.

A Greek islander has curious fancies about the many storms which visit his coasts. Thunder is the Prophet Elias driving in his chariot in pursuit of devils; sometimes a hotly pursued devil takes refuge in a tree, and if lightning strikes this tree the peasants cross themselves and say, "Holy Elias has caught him."

Rain, say they, falls through holes in heaven, which is a species of sieve, and from the rainbow the peasants prognosticate many things about the weather and about the crops. In the morning a rainbow announces luck, in the evening woe, and the three colours denote what kind of harvest there will be. If red prevail the grape will prosper, if yellow the corn, if green the olive. It is curious to notice how in these points the ancient mythology is woven into the new. A rainbow is called the nun's girdle, doubtless an adaptation of the virgin goddess Iris. It is still God's messenger to mortal man to indicate where a hidden treasure is to be found, and in Chios great excitement still prevails whenever a rainbow is seen, for at the revolution every one hid his treasures in the earth before he fled from the Turkish

slaughter. Many died or never returned to dig them up, and the discovery of some of these buried treasures from time to time serves to keep up the excitement.

Our second evening at Pyrgi was passed much as the last, saving that an ancient fowl was substituted for the tender kid, and no dancing closed the evening's revelry. The priest was in attendance again, and so were the vermin, and however much we regretted taking leave of Mrs. Sunday next morning our sorrow had its alleviation.

Then arose the difficulty of remunerating our host and hostess for their kindness. No money of course would be taken—for were we not the friends of their great friends who had given us the letter of introduction?—to receive money would be a distinct breach of hospitality. Experience however in these matters had taught me how to place a coin in the hands of one of the children of the house whilst her mother was looking on, and after this difficult point was settled, I have reason to believe Mrs. Sunday's kiss of farewell was really genuine.

J. THEODORE BENT.

MITCHELHURST PLACE.

"Que voulez-vous ? Hélas ! notre mère Nature,
Comme toute autre mère, a ses enfants gâtés,
Et pour les malvenus elle est avare et dure !"

CHAPTER V.

AN OLD LOVE STORY.

THE next morning saw the three at breakfast in a little room adjoining the drawing-room. The sky was overcast, and before the meal was over Barbara turned her head quickly as the rain lashed the window in sudden fury. She arched her brows, and looked at Mr. Harding with anxious commiseration.

"It's going to be a wet day," she said.

He raised his eyes to the blurred prospect.

"It looks like it, certainly."

Her expression was comically aghast.

"I never thought of its being wet !"

"Yet such a thing does happen occasionally."

"Yes, but it needn't have happened to-day. I thought you would want to go out. What *will* you do ?"

"Stay indoors, if you have no objection."

"But there is nothing to amuse you. You will be so dull."

"Less so than usual, I imagine," said Reynold. "Do you find it so difficult to amuse yourself on a wet day ?"

"No, but I have a great deal to do. Besides, it is different. Don't men always want to be amused more than women ?"

"Poor men !" said he.

Mr. Hayes read his letters and seemed to take no heed of his niece's trouble. But it appeared, when breakfast was finished, that he had arranged how the morning should be spent. He announced his intention of taking young Harding over the Place, and he

carried it out with a thoroughness which would have done honour to a professional guide, showing all the pictures, mentioning the size of the rooms, and relating the few family traditions—none of which, by the way, reflected any especial credit on the Rothwells. He stopped with bright-eyed appreciation before a cracked and discoloured map, where the Mitchelhurst estate was shown in its widest extent. Reynold looked silently at it, and then stalked after his host through all the chilly faded splendour of the house, shivering sometimes, sneering sometimes, but taking it all in with eager eyes, and glancing over the little man's white head at the sombre shelves of the library or the portraits on the walls. Mr. Hayes was fluent, precise, and cold. Only once did he hesitate. They had come to a small sitting-room on the ground floor, which, in spite of long disuse, still somehow conveyed the impression that it had belonged to a young man.

"This was John Rothwell's favourite room," he said. He looked round. "I remember, yes, I remember, as if it were yesterday, how he used——"

Harding waited, but he stood staring at the rusty grate, and left the sentence unfinished.

"And to think that now he should be living from hand to mouth on the Continent !" he said at last, and compressed his lips significantly.

He took the young man to the servants' hall, across which the giggling voices of two or three maids echoed shrilly, till they were suddenly silenced by the master's approach. Reynold followed him down long stone passages, and thought, as he went,

how icy and desolate they must be on a black winter night. He was oppressed by the size and dreariness of the place, and bewildered by the multiplicity of turnings.

"I think," said Mr. Hayes suddenly, "that I have shown you all there is to see indoors."

And, as Reynold replied that he was much obliged, he pushed a door, and motioned to his guest to precede him. Reynold stepped forward, and discovered that he was in the entrance hall, facing Barbara, who had just come down the broad white stairs, and still had her hand upon the balustrade. It seemed to him as if he had come through the windings of that stony labyrinth, the hollow rooms and pale corridors, to find a richly-coloured blossom at the heart of all.

"Oh, Barbara, I'll leave Mr. Harding to you now," said the old gentleman. "I'm going to my study—I must write some letters."

He crossed the black and white pavement with brisk, short steps, and vanished through a doorway.

"Has uncle shown you everything?" she asked.

"I should think so."

"It's a fine place, isn't it?"

"Very fine, and very big," said Harding slowly. "Very empty, and ghostly, and dead."

"Oh, you don't like it! I thought it would be different to you. I thought it would seem like home, since it belonged to your own people."

"Home, sweet home!" he answered with a queer smile. "Well, it is a fine place, as you say. And what have you been doing all the morning?"

"Housekeeping," said Barbara. "And now"—she set down a small basket of keys on the hall table, as if she were preparing for action—"now I am going to set the clock right."

"I'll stay for that if you'll allow me," said Reynold. "I remember what you told me last night. It is the time, and the world stands still when it stops."

"For me, not for you," the girl

replied. "You have your watch—you don't believe in the big clock."

"Yes, I do. Here, in Mitchellhurst, what does one want with any but Mitchellhurst time? What have I to do with Greenwich? But as for Mitchellhurst, your uncle has talked to me till I feel as if I were all the Rothwells who ever lived here. Why, what's this? Sunshine!"

"Yes," said Barbara. "It's going to clear up."

It could hardly be called actual sunlight, but there certainly was a touch of pale autumn gold growing brighter about them as they stood.

Harding was listening to the monotonous tick—tick—tick—tick.

"I remember a man in some book," he said, "who didn't like to hear a clock going—always counting out time in small change."

"Oh, but that's a worrying idea! I should hate to think of my life doled out to me like that!"

"I'm afraid you must," he answered, with his little rough-edged laugh. "It would be very delightful to take one's life in a lump, but how are you going to have more than a moment in a moment? There are plenty of us always trying to do it. If you could find out the way——"

"How, trying?" said Barbara.

"Trying to keep the past and grasp the future," Harding replied. "Working and waiting for some moment which is to hold at least half a lifetime—when it comes! Oh, I quite agree with you; I should like a feast, and I am fed by spoonfuls!"

She looked up at him a little doubtfully, and the clock went on ticking. "I always thought it was like a heart beating," she said, swerving from the idea he had presented as if it were distasteful. "Now!"

There was silence in the empty hall, as if, in very truth, she had laid her brown young hand upon Time's flying pulse, and stilled it.

"Talk of killing time!" said Harding.

"No," Barbara answered, without

turning her head. "Time's asleep—that's all—asleep and dreaming. He'll soon wake up again."

She had so played with the idle fancy that, quite unconsciously, she spoke in a hushed voice, which deepened the impression of stillness. Harding said no more, he simply watched her. His imagination had been quickened by the sight of the Place; its traditional memories, its pride, and its decay had touched him more deeply than he knew. Life, with its hardness and its haste, its obscure and ugly miseries and needs, had relaxed its grasp, and left him to himself for a little space in the midst of that curious loneliness. He felt as if the wide, living, wind-swept world beyond its walls were something altogether alien and apart. Everything about him was pale and dim; the very sunlight was faded, as if it were the faint reflection of a glory that was gone; everything rested as if in the peace of something that was neither life nor death. Everything was faded and dim, except the girl who stood, softly breathing, a couple of steps away, and even she seemed to be held by the enchantment of the place, and to wait in passive acquiescence. Reynold's grey eyes dilated and deepened.

But as she stood there, unconscious of his gaze, Barbara smiled. It was just the slightest possible smile, as if she answered some smiling memory; a curve of the lip, hardly more than hinted, which might betoken nothing deeper than the recollection of some melodious scrap of rhyme or music. Yet Reynold drew back as if it stung him. "That's not for me!" he said to himself.

The movement startled Barbara from her reverie. "Oh, how like you are to that picture in the drawing-room!" she exclaimed, impulsively.

He knew what she meant, and the innocent utterance was a second sting. But he laughed. "What, the good-looking one?"

It seemed to her that she could have found a light answer but for his eyes

upon her. As it was, he had the gratification of seeing her colour and hesitate. "I—I wasn't thinking—I didn't mean—" she stammered, shyly. "Oh, of course!" And then, angry with herself for her unreadiness, she stepped forward, and, with a gesture of impatience, set the pendulum swinging.

"Time is to go on again!" said he.

"Yes," Barbara replied, decidedly. "It would be tiresome if it stood still long. It had better go on. Besides, I'm cold," and she turned away with a pretty little shiver. "I want to go to the fire; I can't stay to attend to it any longer."

Harding lingered, and after an instant of irresolution she left him to a world which had resumed its ordinary course.

At luncheon there was the inevitable mention of the weather, and Mr. Hayes, with his eyes fixed upon his plate, said, "Yes, it has cleared up nicely. I suppose you are going into the village?"

The young people hesitated, not knowing to whom the question was addressed. Miss Strange waited for Mr. Harding, and Mr. Harding for Miss Strange. Then they said "Yes" at the same moment, and felt themselves pledged to go together.

"I thought so," said Mr. Hayes, and began to remind his niece of this thing and that which she was to be sure and show their visitor. "And the sooner you go the better," he added when the meal was over. "The days grow short."

Barbara looked questioningly at Mr. Harding. "If you like to go——"

"I shall be delighted, if you will allow me," said the young man, and a few minutes later they went together down the avenue.

"The days grow short," Mr. Hayes had said, and everything about them seemed set to that sad autumnal burden. The boughs above their heads, the ground under foot, were heavy with moisture, the bracken was withered and brown, there were no

more butterflies, but at every breath the yellowing leaves took their uncertain flight to the wet earth. The young people, each with a neatly furled umbrella, walked with something of ceremonious self-consciousness, making little remarks about the scenery, and Mr. Hayes, from his window, followed them with his eyes.

"Rothwell, every inch of him," he said to himself, as Reynold turned and looked backward at the Place. "I never knew one of the lot yet who didn't think that particular family had a right to despise all the rest of the world. The only difference I can see is that this fellow despises the family too. Well, let him! Why not? But, good Lord! what an end of all his mother's hopes!" And Mr. Hayes went back to his fireside—his, while John Rothwell was dodging his creditors on the Continent! There was unutterable dreariness in the thought of such a destiny, but the little old man regretted it with a complacent rubbing of his hands and a remembrance of Rothwell's arrogance. There is a belief, engendered by the moral stories of our childhood, that it is good for a man that his unreasonable pride should be broken—a belief which takes no heed of the chance that its downfall may hurl the whole fabric of life and conduct into the foulness of the gutter. Mr. Hayes naturally took the moral story view of a pride by which he had once been personally wounded; yet he wore a deprecating air, as if Fate, in too amply avenging him, had paid a compliment to his importance which was almost overpowering.

It was more than a quarter of a century since Rothwell and he had been antagonists, though they had not avowed the fact in so many words, and Rothwell, with no honour or profit to himself, had baffled him. Herbert Hayes was then over forty and unmarried. The Mitchelhurst gossips had made up their minds that he would live and die a bachelor. But one November Sunday he came, dap-

per, bright-eyed, and self-satisfied, to Mitchelhurst church, gazed with the utmost propriety into his glossy hat, stood up when the parson's dreary voice broke the silence with "When the wicked man——" and, looking across at the Rothwells' great pew, met his fate in a moment.

The pew held its usual occupants—the old squire, grey, angular, and scornful; young Rothwell, darker, taller, paler, less politely contemptuous, and more lowering; Kate, erect and proud, sulkily conscious of a beauty which the rustic congregation could not understand. These three Hayes had often seen. But there was a fourth, a frail, colourless girl, burdened rather than clothed with sombre draperies of crape, pale to the very lips, and swaying languidly as she stood, who unconsciously caught his glance and held it. She suffered her head, with the little black bonnet set on the abundance of her pale hair, to droop over her Prayer-book, and she slid downward when the exhortation was ended as if she could stand no longer. The time seemed interminable to him until she rose again.

His instantaneous certainty that there was no drop of Rothwell blood in her veins was confirmed by later inquiry. He learnt that she was distantly related to the squire's wife, and had recently lost her parents. Though she had not been left absolutely penniless, her little pittance was not enough to keep her in idleness, and she was staying at Mitchelhurst while the question of her future was debated. It was difficult to see what Minnie Newton was to do in a hardworking world. She could sink into helplessly graceful attitudes, she could watch you with a softly troubled gaze, anxious to learn what she ought to think or say; she was delicate, gentle, and very slightly educated. She had not a thought of her own, and she was pure with the kind of purity which cannot grasp the idea of evil, and fails to recognise it, unless indeed vice is going in rags and dirt

to the police-station, and using shocking language by the way. Her simplicity was touching. She thought nothing of herself; she would cling to the first hand that happened to be held out to her. She might be saved by good luck, but nature had obviously designed her for a victim.

Miss Newton was polite to Mr. Hayes as to everybody else, but she was the last person at Mitchellhurst Place to suspect the little gentleman's passion. The very servants found it out, and wondered at her innocence. John Rothwell laughed.

"What a fool she is!" he said to his sister, as he stood by the window one day, and saw Hayes coming up the avenue.

"That's an undoubted fact," said the magnificent Kate.

"And what a fool he is!" John continued.

"Well, we won't quarrel about that either," she replied liberally. "They will be all the better matched."

"Matched?" said Rothwell. "No."

She looked up hastily.

"Eh?" she said. "Not matched? And why not?"

Instead of answering, he deliberately lighted a cigarette and smoked, gazing darkly at her.

Kate shrugged her shoulders.

"What difference can it possibly make to you?"

He took his cigarette from his lips and looked at it.

"It will make a difference to him," he said at last.

The bell rang, and the knocker added its emphatic summons. One of Rothwell's dogs began to bark. Kate had risen, and stood with her eyes fixed on her brother's face.

"It would be a very good thing for the girl," she remarked meditatively. "I don't see what is to become of her, poor thing, unless she marries."

"Damn him!" said Rothwell.

The answer was not so irrelevant as it appeared. His gaze was as steady as Kate's own, and seemed to prolong his words as a singer prolongs a note.

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She drew her brows together, as if perplexed.

"Well," she said, turning away, "I must go and look after our lovers!"

"And I," he said.

The dapper, contented little man had done Rothwell no harm, but the young fellow cherished a black hatred, born of the dulness of his vacant life. Hayes, without being rich, was very comfortably off, and he was apt to betray the fact with innocent ostentation. A sovereign was less to him than a shilling to John Rothwell, and it seemed to the latter that he could always hear the gold chinking when Hayes talked. One could do so much with a sovereign, and so little with a shilling. Rothwell was hungry, with a hunger which only just fell short of being a literal fact, and he had to stand by, with his hands in his empty pockets, while Hayes could have good dinners, good wine, good clothes, good horses, whatever he liked in the way of pleasure—and was "such a contemptible little cad with it all," the young man snarled. His own poverty would have been more bearable had it not been for his neighbour's ease and security. And now, heaven be praised!—heaven?—the prosperous man had set his heart on this white-faced, fair-haired, foolish girl who was under the roof of Mitchellhurst Place, and for once he should be baffled.

Rothwell set to work with evil ingenuity—it seemed almost fiendish, but, really, he had nothing else to do—to ruin Hayes's chance of success. But for him it must have been almost a certainty. Kate was inclined to favour the suitor. The old squire disliked him, perhaps with a little of his son's feeling, but would have been very well satisfied to see the girl provided for. And Minnie Newton was there for any man, who had a will of his own, and was not absolutely repulsive, to take if he pleased. The course of true love seemed about to run with perfect smoothness till young Rothwell stepped in and troubled it.

Mockery, not slander, was his weapon.

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As Miss Newton idled over her embroidery he would lounge near her and make little jests about Hayes's age, size, and manners. She listened with a troubled face. Of course Mr. Rothwell was talking very cleverly, and she tried not to remember that she had found Mr. Hayes very kind and pleasant when he called the day before. Of course it was absurd that a man of that age should want to be taken for five-and-twenty—yes, and he had a *very* ridiculous way of putting his head on one side like a bird—when Mr. Rothwell had insisted on having her opinion, she had said, "Yes, it was *very* ridiculous"—and a gentleman, a real gentleman, would not talk so much about his money, and what he could do with it—Mr. Rothwell said so, and he certainly knew. And as she had agreed to it she supposed it was quite right that he should repeat this at dinner-time, as if it were her own remark, though she wished he wouldn't, because his father turned sharply and looked at her. But, no doubt, Mr. Hayes did look absurdly small by the side of John Rothwell, and there was something common in his manners. Many people might think they were all very well, but a lady would feel that there was something wanting. And so on, and so on, till she began to ask herself what John Rothwell would say of her if, after all this, she showed more than the coldest civility to Mr. Hayes.

Kate perfectly understood the position of affairs, but did not choose openly to oppose her brother. If Hayes would have come and carried Minnie off, young Lochinvar fashion, she would have been secretly pleased. As it was, she was contemptuously kind to the girl, and if the little suitor met the two young women in the village, Miss Rothwell shook hands and looked away. Once she found herself some business to do at the Mitchelhurst shop, and sent Minnie home, lest she should be out too long in the December cold. She had spied Herbert Hayes coming along the

street, and had rightly guessed that he would see and pursue the slim, black-clothed figure. And, indeed, he used his walk with Miss Newton to such good purpose that he might have won her promise then and there if a tall young man had not suddenly sprung over a stile and confronted them. Minnie fairly cowered in embarrassment as she met Rothwell's meaning glance, which assumed that she would be delighted to be rid of a bore, and she suffered him to give her his arm and to take her home, leaving poor Hayes to feel very small indeed as he stood in the middle of the road. He tried a letter, but it only called forth a little feebly-penned word of refusal as faint as an echo.

Hayes never suspected the young man's deliberate malice. He fancied the old squire, if anybody, was his enemy; but he was more inclined to set the difficulty down to the Rothwells' notorious pride than to any special ill-will to himself.

"No one is good enough for them, curse them!" he said over the little note. "They won't give me a chance of winning her. I'm not beaten yet though!"

But he was. Early in January Minnie Newton took cold, drooped in the chilly dreariness of the old house, and died before the spring came in.

One day Kate Rothwell came upon Hayes as he lingered, a melancholy little figure, by the girl's grave.

"Ah, Miss Rothwell," he said, looking up at her, "I wanted to have had the right to care for her and mourn her, but it was not to be!"

"No," said Kate. "I'm sorry," she added, after a moment. It was just at the time when she herself was about to defy all the barren traditions of the Rothwells to marry Sidney Harding with his brilliant prospects of wealth. Harding's half-brother, who had made the great business, was pleased with the match, and promised Sidney a partnership in a couple of years. Everything was bright for Kate, and she could afford a regretful

thought to poor Hayes. "I'm sorry," she said.

Her voice was hard, but the slightest proffer of sympathy was enough. "Ah! I knew you wished me well—God bless you!" said the little man, "and help you as you would have helped me!"

Perhaps Kate Rothwell felt that at that rate Providence would not take any very active interest in her affairs. She turned aside impatiently. "Pray keep your thanks for some one who deserves them, Mr. Hayes. I don't."

"You could not do anything, but I know you were good to *her*. She told me, that afternoon——" He spoke in just the proper tone of emotion.

"Nonsense!" Kate answered, sharply. "How could she? there was nothing to tell." Mr. Hayes might well say, even a quarter of a century later, that Miss Rothwell had an unpleasant manner.

Nevertheless she held a place in that idealised picture of his love which in his old age served him for a memory. In Sidney Harding's death, within a year of the marriage, he saw a kindred stroke to that which had robbed him of his own hope, and he never thought of Kate without a touch of sentimental loyalty. When he met Kate's son that October afternoon with the familiar face and voice, on his way to Mitchelhurst, he had felt that, Rothwell though he was, he must be welcomed for his mother's sake. And yet it had almost seemed as if it were John Rothwell himself come back to sneer in a new fashion.

How came he to be so evidently poor while old Harding was rolling in wealth? Mr. Hayes, sitting over the fire, wondered at this failure of Kate's hopes. People had called it a fair exchange, her old name for the Hardings' abundance of newly-coined gold. But where was the gold? Plainly not in this young Harding's pockets. What did he do for a living? Why was he not in his uncle's office, a man of business with the world before him? There was no stamp of success about

this listless, long-legged fellow, who had come, as hopeless as any Rothwell, to linger about that scene of slow decay. "He'll do no good," said Mr. Hayes to himself, stirring up a cheerful blaze.

CHAPTER VI.

REYNOLD'S RESOLUTION.

MEANWHILE the young people had passed through the great gate and turned to the right. "Do you mind which way you go?" Barbara asked, and Reynold replied that he left it entirely to her. "Then," she said, "we will go this way, and come back by the village; you will get a better view so."

At first, however, it seemed that a view was the one thing which was certainly not to be had in the road they had chosen. On their left was a tangled hedge, on their right a dank and dripping plantation of firs. The slim, straight stems, seen one beyond another, conveyed to Reynold the impression of a melancholy crowd, pressing silently to the boundary of the road on which he walked. It was one of those fantastic pictures which reveal themselves in unfamiliar landscapes, and Barbara, who had seen the wood under a score of varying aspects, took no especial heed of this one, as she picked her way daintily by the young man's side. Indeed she did not even note the moment when the trees were succeeded by a turnip-field, lying wide and wet under the pale sky. But when in its turn the field gave place to an open gateway and a drive full of deep ruts, in which the water stood, she paused. "You see that house?" she said.

It was evident from its surroundings of soaked yard, miscellaneous buildings, dirty tumbrils, and clustered stacks, that it was a farm-house. Harding looked at it and turned inquiringly to her. "It was much larger once," said Barbara. "Part of it was pulled down a long while

ago. Your people lived here before they built Mitchelhurst Place."

He pushed out his lower lip. "Well," he said, "I think they showed their good taste in getting out of this."

"But it was better then," said the girl. "And even now, sometimes in the spring when I come here for cowslips—"

She stopped short, for he was smiling. "Oh, no doubt! Everything looks better then. But I have come too late." He had to step aside as he spoke to let a manure cart go by, labouring along the miry way. "And what do you call this house?" he asked.

"Mitchelhurst Hall. I don't think there is anything much to see, but if you would like to look over it or to walk round it—"

"No, thank you; I am content." He took off his hat in mocking homage to the home of the Rothwells, and turned to go. "And have you any more decayed residences to show me, Miss Strange?"

"Only some graves," she answered, simply.

"Oh, they are all graves!" said Harding with his short laugh, swinging his umbrella as they resumed their walk. Already Barbara had become accustomed to that little jarring laugh, which had no merriment in it. She did not like it, but she was curiously impressed by it. When the young man was grave and stiff and shy she was sorry for him; she remembered that he was only Mr. Reynold Harding, their guest for a week. But when he was sufficiently at his ease to laugh she felt as if all the Rothwells were mocking, and she were the interloper and inferior.

"I suppose it does seem like that to you—as if they were all graves," she said timidly, as she led the way across the road to a gate in the tangled hedge; the field into which it led sloped steeply down. "That is what people call the best view of Mitchelhurst," she explained.

To the left was Mitchelhurst Place,

gaunt and white among its warped and weather-beaten trees. Before them lay the dotted line of Mitchelhurst Street, and they looked down into the square cabbage-plots. The sails of the windmill swung heavily round, and the smoke went up from the blacksmith's forge. To the right was the church, with its thickset tower, and the sun shining feebly on the wet surface of its leaden roof. Barbara pointed out a small oblong patch of grass and evergreens as the vicarage garden, while a bare building, of the rawest red brick, was the Mitchelhurst workhouse. The view was remarkably comprehensive. Mitchelhurst lay spread below them in small and melancholy completeness.

"Yes, it's all there, right enough," said Reynold, leaning on the gate. "An excellent view. All there, from the Place where my people spent their money, to the workhouse, where—By Jove!" his voice dropped suddenly, "I'm not Rothwell enough to have a right to be taken into the Mitchelhurst workhouse! They'd send me on somewhere, I suppose. I wonder which they would call my parish!"

"Are you sorry?" Barbara asked, after a pause.

"Sorry not to be in the workhouse?" indicating it with a slight movement of his finger. "No, not particularly."

"I didn't mean that," said the girl, a little shortly. "I meant, of course, are you sorry you are not a Rothwell?"

"I don't know."

He spoke slowly, half reluctantly, and still leaned on the gate, with his eyes wandering from point to point of the little landscape, which was softened and saddened by the pale light and paler haze of October. It was Barbara who finally broke the silence. "You didn't like the house this morning, and you didn't like the old hall just now, so I thought most likely you wouldn't care for this."

"Well, it isn't beautiful," he replied, without turning his head. "Do

you care much about it, Miss Strange? Why should anybody care about it? There are wonderful places in the world—beautiful places full of sunshine. Why should we trouble ourselves about this little grey and green island where we happened to be born? And what are these few acres in it more than any other bit of ploughed land and meadow?"

"I thought you didn't care for it," said Barbara, sagely. "I thought you scorned it."

"Scorn it—I can't scorn it! It isn't mine!" He turned away from it, as if in a sudden movement of impatience, and lounged with his back to the gate. "It's like my luck!" he said, kicking a stone in the road.

Barbara was interested. Harding's tone revealed the strength and bitterness of his feelings. He had never seemed to her so much of a Rothwell as he did at that moment. "What is like your luck?" she ventured to ask.

He jerked his head in the direction of Mitchelhurst. "I may as well be honest," he said. "Honest with myself—if I can! Look there—I have mocked at that place all my life; for very shame's sake I have kept away from it because I had vowed I didn't care whether one stone of it was left upon another. What was it to me? I am not a Rothwell. I'm Reynold Harding, son of Sidney Harding, son of Reynold Harding—there my pedigree grows vague. My grandfather is an important man—we can't get beyond him. He died while my father was in petticoats. He was a pork-butcher in a small way. I believe he could write his name—*my* name—and that he always declared that his father was a Reynold too. But we don't know anything about my great-grandfather—perhaps he was a pork-butcher in a smaller way. My uncle Robert went to London as a boy and made all the money, pensioned his father, and afterwards educated his half-brother Sidney, who was twenty years younger than himself. He would have

made my father his partner if he had lived. If my father had lived I might have been rich. As it is, I'm not rich, and I'm not a Rothwell."

"Well, you look like one!" said Barbara. She was not very wise. It seemed to her a cruel thing that this earlier Reynold should have been a pork-butcher—a misfortune on which she would not comment. She looked up at the younger Reynold with the sincerest sympathy shining in her eyes, and in an unreasoning fashion of her own took part with him and with the old family, as if his grandfather were an unwarranted intruder who had thrust himself into their superior society. "You look like one!" she exclaimed, and Reynold smiled.

"And after all," she said, pursuing her train of thought, "you are half Rothwell, you know. As much Rothwell as Harding, are you not?"

He was still smiling. "True. But that is a kind of thing which doesn't do by halves."

She assented with a sigh. She had never before talked to a man whose grandfather was a pork-butcher, and she did not know what consolation to offer. She could only look shyly and wistfully at Mr. Harding, as he leaned against the gate with his back to the prospect, while she resolved that she would never tell her uncle. She did not think her companion less interesting after the revelation. This discord, this irony of fate, this mixing of the blood of the Rothwells and the small tradesman, seemed to her to explain much of young Harding's sullen discontent. He was the last descendant of the old family of which she had dreamed so often, and he was the victim of an unmerited wrong. She wanted him to say more. "And you wouldn't come to Mitchelhurst before?" she said, suggestively.

"No; but the thought of the place was pulling at me all the time. I couldn't get rid of it. And so—here I am! And I have seen the dream of my life face to face—it's behind my back just at this minute, but I can

see it as well as if I were looking at it. I'm very grateful to you for showing me this view, Miss Strange, but you'll excuse me if I don't turn round while I speak of it!"

"Oh, yes," said Barbara, wonderingly.

He had his elbows on the top rail of the gate, and looked downward at the muddy way, rough with the hoof marks of cattle. "You see," he explained, "I want to say the kind of thing one says behind a—a landscape's back."

"I'm sorry to hear it," she answered. She had drawn a little to one side, and had laid a small gloved hand on one of the gate posts. Somebody, many years before, had deeply cut a clumsy M on the cracked and roughened surface of the wood. The letter was as grey and as weather-worn as the rest. Barbara touched it delicately with a finger tip, and followed its ungainly outline. Probably it was his own initial that the rustic had hacked, standing where she stood, but she recognised the possibility that the rough carving might be the utterance of the great secret of joy and pain, and the touch was almost a caress.

"Some people follow their dreams through life, and never get more than a glimpse of them, even as dreams," said Harding, slowly. "Well, I have seen mine. I have had a good look at it. I know what it is like. It is dreary—it is narrow—cold—hideous."

"Oh!" cried Barbara, as if his words hurt her. Then, recovering herself, "I'm sorry you dislike it so much. Well, you must give it up, mustn't you?"

He laughed. "Life without a fancy, without a desire!" he said.

"Find something else to wish for."

"What? If there were anything else, should I care twopence for Mitchelhurst? No, it is my dream still—I dream I'm never likely to realise, but the only possible dream for me. Only now I know how poor and dull my highest success would be."

"You had better have stayed away," said the girl.

He took his elbows off the gate, and bowed in acknowledgment of the polite speech. "Oh, you know what I mean," she said hurriedly.

"Yes, I know. And, except for the kindness of your fairy godmother, I believe you are perfectly right. *That*, of course, is a different question."

Barbara would not answer what she fancied might be a sneer. "You see the place at its worst," she said, "and there is nobody to care for it; everything is neglected and going to ruin. Don't you think it would be different if it belonged to some one who loved it? Why don't you make your fortune," she exclaimed, with sanguine, bright-eyed directness, as if the fortune were an easy certainty, "and come back and set everything right? Don't you think you could care for Mitchelhurst if——"

She would have finished her sentence readily enough, but Reynold caught it up.

"If!" he said, with a sudden startled significance in his tone. Then, with an air of prompt deference, "Shall I go and make the fortune at once, Miss Strange? Shall I? Yes, I think I could care for Mitchelhurst, as you say, *if*—" He smiled. "One might do much with a fortune, no doubt."

"Make it then," said Barbara, conscious of a faint and undefined embarrassment.

"Must it be a very big one?"

"Oh, I think it may as well be a tolerable size, while you are about it. Hadn't we better be moving on?"

Mr. Harding assented. "Where are we going now?"

"To the church. That is, if you care to go there."

"Oh, I like to go very much. I wonder what you would call a tolerable fortune," he said in a meditative tone.

"My opinion doesn't matter."

"But you are going to wish me success while I am away making it?"

"Oh, certainly."

"That will be a help," he said gravely. "I shan't look for an omen in the sky just now—do you see how threatening it is out yonder?"

The clouds rolled heavily upwards, and massed themselves above their heads as they hastened down a steep lane which brought them out by the church. Barbara stopped at the clerk's cottage for a ponderous key, and then led the way through a little creaking gate. The path along which they went was like a narrow ditch, the mould, heaped high on either side, seemed as if it were burdened with its imprisoned secrets. The undulating graves, overgrown with coarse grasses, rose up, wave-like, against the buttressed walls of the churchyard, high above the level of the outer road. The church itself looked as if it had been dug out of the sepulchral earth, so closely was it surrounded by these shapeless mounds. Barbara, to whom the scene was nothing new, and who was eager to escape the impending shower, flitted, alive, warm, and young, through all this cold decay, and never heeded it. Harding followed her, looking right and left. They passed under two dusky yew trees, and then she thrust her big key into the lock of the south door.

"Are my people buried in the churchyard?" he asked.

"Oh, no!" she exclaimed reverentially. "Your people are all inside."

He stepped in, but when he was about to close the door he stood for a moment, gazing out through the low-browed arch. It framed a picture of old-fashioned headstones fallen all aslant, nettles flourishing upon forgotten graves, the trunks of the great yews, the weed-grown crest of the churchyard wall, defined with singular clearness upon a wide band of yellow sky. The gathered tempest hung above, and its deepening menace intensified the pale tranquillity of the horizon. "I say," said Harding as he turned away, "it's going to pour, you know!"

"Well, we are under shelter," Barbara answered cheerfully, as she laid her key on the edge of one of the pews. "If it clears up again so that we get back in good time it won't matter a bit. And anyhow we've got umbrellas. The font is very old, they say."

Harding obediently inspected the font.

"And there are two curious inscriptions on tablets on the north wall. Mr. Pryor—he's the vicar—is always trying to read them. Do you know much about such things?"

"Nothing at all."

"Oh!" in a tone of disappointment.

"I'm afraid you wouldn't get on with Mr. Pryor then."

"I'm afraid not."

"Perhaps you wouldn't care to look at them."

"Oh, let us look, by all means."

They walked together up the aisle.

"I don't care about them," said Barbara, "but I suppose Mr. Pryor would die happy if he could make them out."

"Then I suspect he is happy meanwhile, though perhaps he doesn't know it," Reynolds replied, looking upward at the half effaced lettering.

"He can read some of it," said the girl, "but nobody can make out the interesting part."

Harding laughed, under his breath. Their remarks had been softly uttered ever since the closing of the door had shut them in to the imprisoned silence. He moved noiselessly a few steps further, and looked round.

Mitchelhurst Church, like Mitchelhurst Place, betrayed a long neglect. The pavement was sunken and uneven, cobwebs hung from the sombre arches, the walls, which had once been white, were stained and streaked, by damp and time, to a blending of melancholy hues. The half light, which struggled through small panes of greenish glass, fell on things blighted, tarnished, faded, dim. The pews with their rush-matted seats were worm-eaten, the crimson velvet of the pulpit was a dingy rag. There was but one bit of vivid modern colouring in the whole

building—a slim lancet window at the west end, a discord sharply struck in the shadowy harmony. "To the memory of the vicar before last," said Barbara, when the young man's glance fell on it. Such gleams of sunlight as lingered yet in the stormy sky without irradiated Michael, the church's patron saint, in the act of triumphing over a small dragon. The contest revealed itself as a mere struggle for existence; a Quaker, within such narrow limits, must have fought for the upper hand as surely as an archangel. Harding as he looked at it could not repress a sigh. He fully appreciated the calmness of the saint, and the neatness with which the little dragon was coiled, but it seemed to him a pity that the vicar before last had happened to die; and he was glad to turn his back on the battle, and follow Miss Strange to the north chancel aisle. "These are all the Rothwell monuments," she said. "Their vault is just below. This is their pew, where we sit on Sunday."

Having said this she moved from his side, and left him gazing at the simple tablets which recorded the later generations of the old house, and the elaborate memorials of more prosperous days. More than one recumbent figure slept there, each with upturned face supported on a carved pillow; the bust of a Rothwell was set up in a dusty niche, with lean features peering out of a forest of curling marble hair; carefully graduated families of Rothwells, boys and girls, knelt behind their kneeling parents; the little window, half blocked by the florid grandeur of a grimy monument, had the Rothwell arms emblazoned on it in a dim richness of colour. In this one spot the dreariness of the rest of the building became a stately melancholy. Harding looked down. His foot was resting on the inscribed stone which marked the entrance to that silent, airless place of skeletons and shadows, compared to which even this dim corner, with its mute assemblage, was yet the

upper world of light and life. If he worked, if fortune favoured him, if he succeeded beyond all reasonable hope, if he were indeed predestined to triumph, that little stone might one day be lifted for him.

The windows darkened momentarily with the coming of the tempest. Through the dim diamond panes the masses of the yew-trees were seen, and their movement was like the stirring of vast black wings. The effigies of the dead men frowned in the deepening gloom, and their young descendant folded his arms, and leaned against the high pew, with a slant gleam of light on his pale Rothwell face. Barbara went restlessly and yet cautiously up and down the central aisle, and paused by the reading-desk to turn the leaves of the great old-fashioned prayer-book which lay there. When its cover was lifted it exhaled a faint odour, as of the dead Sundays of a century and more. While she lingered, lightly conscious of the lapse of vague years, reading petitions for the welfare of "Thy servant *GEORGE*, our most gracious King and Governour," "her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, and all the Royal Family," the page grew indistinct in the threatening twilight, as if it would withdraw itself from her idle curiosity. She looked up with a shiver, as overhead and around burst the multitudinous noises of the storm, the rain gushing on the leaden roof, the water streaming drearily from the gutters to beat on the earth below, and, in a few moments, the quick, monotonous fall of drops through a leak close by. This lasted for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour. Then the sky grew lighter, the downpour slackened, a sense of over-shadowing oppression seemed to pass away, and St. Michael and his dragon brightened cheerfully. Barbara went to the door and threw it open, and a breath of fresh air came in with a chilly smell of rain.

As she stood in the low archway she heard Harding's step on the pave-

ment behind her. It was more alert and decided than usual, and when she turned he met her glance with a smile.

"Well?" she said. "I didn't like to disturb you, you looked so serious."

"I was thinking," he admitted. "And it was a rather serious occasion. My people are not very cheerful company."

"And now you have thought?"

"Yes," he said, still smiling. "Yes, I have thought—seriously, with my serious friends yonder."

Barbara, as she stood, with her fingers closed on the heavy handle of the door, and her face turned towards Harding, fixed her eyes intently on his.

"I know!" she exclaimed. "You have made up your mind to come back to Mitchelhurst."

"Who knows?" said he. "I'm not sanguine, but we'll see what time and fortune have to say to it. At any rate my people are patient enough—they'll wait for me!"

To the girl, longing for a romance, the idea of the young man's resolution was delightful. She looked at him with a little quivering thrill of impatience, as if she would have had him do something towards the great end that very moment. Her small, uplifted face was flushed, and her eyes were like stars. The brightening light outside shone on the soft brown velvet of her dress, and something in her eager, lightly-poised attitude gave Reynold the impression of a dainty brown-plumaged, bright-eyed bird, ready for instant flight. He almost stretched an instinctive hand to grasp and detain her, lest she should loose her hold of the iron ring and be gone.

"I know you will succeed—you will come back!" she exclaimed. "How long first, I wonder?"

"*Shall* I succeed?" said Reynold, half to himself, but half-questioning her to win the sweet, unconscious assurance, which meant so little, yet mocked so deep a meaning.

"Yes!" she replied. "You will! You must be master here."

Master! She might have put it in a dozen different ways, and found no word to waken the swift, meaning flash in his eyes which that word did. Her pulses did not quicken, she perfectly understood that he was thinking of Mitchelhurst. She could not understand what mere dead earth and stone Mitchelhurst was to the man at her side.

"You will have to restore the church one of these days," she said.

Harding nodded.

"Certainly. But it will be very ugly, anyhow."

"Well, at least you must have the roof mended. And now, please, will you get the key? It is on the ledge of that pew just across the aisle. I think we had better be going—it has almost left off raining."

She stepped outside and put up her umbrella, while he locked up his ancestors, smiling grimly. It seemed rather unnecessary to turn the key on the family party in that dusty little corner. They were quiet folks, and, as he had said, they would wait for him and his fortune not impatiently. If he could have shut in the brightness of youth, the warmth and life and sweetness which alone could make the fortune worth having, if he could have come back in the hour of success to unfasten the door and find all there—then indeed his big key would have been a priceless talisman. Unfortunately one can shut nothing safely away that is not dead. The old Rothwells were secure enough, but the rest was at the mercy of time and change, and all the winds that blow.

The pair were silent as they turned into Mitchelhurst Street. Reynold looked at the small, shabby houses, and noted the swinging sign of the "Rothwell Arms," though his deeper thoughts were full of other things. But about half way through the village he awoke to a sudden consciousness of eyes. Eyes peered through small-paned windows, stared boldly from

open doorways, met him inquisitively in the faces of loiterers on the path, or were lifted from the dull task of mending the road as he walked by with Barbara. He looked over his shoulder and found that other people were looking over their shoulders, after which he felt himself completely encompassed.

"People here seem interested," he remarked to Miss Strange, while a pale-faced, slatternly girl, with swiftly-plaiting fingers, leaned forward to get a better view.

"Why, of course they are interested! You are a stranger, you know. It is quite an excitement for them."

"You call that an excitement?" said he.

"Yes. If you spent your life straw-plaiting in one of these cottages you would be excited if a stranger went by. It would be kinder of you if you did not walk so fast."

"No, no," said Harding, quickening his steps. "I don't profess philanthropy."

"Besides, you are not altogether a stranger," she went on. "I dare say they think you are one of the old family come to buy up the property."

"Why should they think anything of the kind?" he demanded incredulously.

"Well, they know you are staying at the Place. Every child in the street knows that. And, you see, Mr. Harding, nobody comes to Mitchelhurst without some special reason, so perhaps they have a right to be curious. I remember how they stared a few months ago—it was at a gentleman who was just walking down the road——"

"Indeed," said Harding. "And what was *his* special reason for coming? I suppose," he added quickly, "I've as good a right to be curious as other Mitchelhurst people."

"Oh, I don't know. He was a friend of Uncle Herbert's—he came to see him."

"And did *he* walk slowly from

motives of pure kindness?" the young man persisted.

"Yes," said Barbara defiantly. "He stood stock still and looked at the straw plaiting. I don't know about the kindness; perhaps he liked it."

"Well, I don't like it."

"But you needn't take such very long steps: these three cottages are the last. Do you know I'm very nearly running?"

Of course he slackened his pace and begged her pardon; but in so doing he relapsed into the uneasy self-consciousness of their first interview. When they reached the gate of the avenue he held it open for her to pass, murmuring something about walking a bit further. Barbara looked at him in surprise, and then, with a little smiling nod, went away under the trees, wondering what was amiss. "I can't have offended him—how could I?" she said to herself, and she made up her mind that her new friend was certainly queer. It was the Rothwell temper, no doubt, and yet his awkward muttering had been more like the manner of a sullen schoolboy. A Rothwell should have been loftily superior, even if he were disagreeable. It was true, as Barbara reflected, almost in spite of herself, that Mr. Harding had no such hereditary obligation on the pork-butcher side of his pedigree.

Reynold had spoken out of the bitterness of his heart, and a bitter frankness is the frankest of all. But perhaps he had not shown his wisdom when he so quickly confided his grandfather to Miss Strange. Because we may have tact enough to choose the mood in which our friend shall listen to our secret, we are a little too apt to forget that the secret, once uttered, remains with him in all his moods. In this case the girl had been a sympathetic listener, but young Harding scarcely intended that the elder Reynold should be so vividly realised.

Later, when all outside the windows was growing blank and black, Barbara went up to dress for dinner.

She was nearly ready when there came a knock at her door, and she hurried, candle in hand, to open it. In the gloom of the passage stood the red-armed village girl who waited on her.

"Please, miss, the gentleman told me to give you this," said the messenger, awkwardly offering something which was only a formless mass in the darkness.

"What?" said Miss Strange, and turned the light upon it. The wavering little illumination fell on a confusion of autumn leaves, rich with their dying colours, and shining with rain. Among them, indistinctly, were berries of various kinds, hips and haws, and poison clusters of a deeper red, vanishing for a moment as the draught blew the candle flame aside, and then re-appearing. One might have fancied them blood drops newly shed on the wet foliage.

"Oh!" Barbara exclaimed in surprise, and after a moment's pause, "give them to me." She gathered them up, despite some thorny stems, with her disengaged hand, and went back into her room. So that was the meaning of Mr. Harding's solitary walk! She stood by the table, delicately picking out the most vivid clusters, and trying their effect against the soft cloud of her hair, cloudier than ever in the dusk of her mirror. "I hope he hasn't been slipping into any more ditches!" she said to herself.

With that she sighed, for the thought recalled to her the melancholy of an autumnal landscape. She remembered an earlier gift, roses and myrtle, a summer gift, the giver of which had gone when the summer waned. She had seen him last on a hot September day. "We never said good-bye," Barbara thought, and let her hand hang with the berries in it. "He said he should not go till the beginning of October. When he came that afternoon and I was out, and he only saw uncle, I was sure he would come again. Well, I suppose

he didn't care to. He could if he liked—a girl can't; there are lots of things a girl can't do; but a man can call if he pleases. Well, he must have gone away before now. And he didn't even write a line, he only sent a message by uncle, his kind regards—Who wants his kind regards?—and he was sorry not to see me. Very well, my kind regards, and I'm sure I don't want to see him!"

She ended her meditations with an emphatic little nod, but the girl in the mirror who returned it had such a defiantly pouting face that she quite took Barbara by surprise.

"I'm not angry," Miss Strange declared to herself after a pause. "Not the least in the world. The idea is perfectly absurd. It was just a bit of the summer, and now the summer is gone." And so saying she put Mr. Harding's autumn berries in her hair, and fastened them at her throat, and, with her candle flickering dimly through the long dark passages, swept down to the yellow drawing-room to thank him for his gift.

CHAPTER VII.

A GAME OF CHESS.

WHEN Kate Rothwell promised to be Sidney Harding's wife she was very honestly in love with the handsome young fellow. But this happy frame of mind had been preceded by a period of revolt and disgust, when she did not know him, and had resolved vaguely on a marriage—any marriage—which should fulfil certain conditions. And that she should be in love with the man she married was not one of them. In fact, the conditions were almost all negative ones. She had decreed that her husband should not be a conspicuous fool, should not be vicious, should not be repulsively vulgar, and should not be an unendurable bore. On the other hand he should be fairly well off. She did not demand a large fortune, she was inclined to rate the gift and prospect

of making money as something more than the possession of a certain sum which its owner could do nothing but guard. Given a fairly cultivated man, and she felt that she would absolutely prefer that he should be engaged in some business which might grow and expand, stimulating the hopes and energies of all connected with it. The sterility and narrowness of life at Mitchelhurst had sickened her very soul. She was conscious of a fund of rebellious strength, and she demanded liberty to develop herself, liberty to live. She knew very well how women fared among the Rothwells. She had seen two of her father's sisters, faded spinsters, worshipping the family pride which had blighted them. Nobody wanted them, their one duty was to cost as little as possible. That they would not disgrace the Rothwell name was taken for granted. Kate used to look at their pinched and dreary faces, and recognise some remnants of beauty akin to her own. She listened to their talk, which was full of details of the pettiest economy, and remembered that these women had been intent on shillings and halfpence all their lives, that neither of them had ever had a five-pound note which she could spend as it pleased her. And their penurious saving had been for—what? Had it been for husband or child it would have been different, the halfpence would have been glorified. But they paid this life-long penalty for the privilege of being the Misses Rothwell of Mitchelhurst. Life with them was simply a careful picking of their way along a downward slope to the family vault, and it was almost a comfort to think that the poor ladies were safely housed there, with their dignity intact, while Kate was yet in her teens.

Later came the little episode of Minnie Newton and her admirer. Kate perceived her brother's indifference to the girl's welfare, and the brutality of his revenge on the man whose crime was his habit of chinking the gold in his waistcoat pocket.

Probably, with her finer instincts, she perceived all this more clearly than did John Rothwell himself. She did not actively intervene, because, in her contemptuous strength, she felt very little pity for a couple whose fate was ostensibly in their own hands. Minnie was not even in love with Hayes, and Kate did not care to oppose her brother in order to force a pliant fool to accept a fortunate chance. She let events take their course, but she drew from them the lesson that her future depended on herself. And, miserably as life at Mitchelhurst was maintained, she was, perhaps, the first of the family to see that the time drew near when it would not be possible to maintain it at all, partly from the natural tendency of all embarrassments to increase, and partly from John Rothwell's character. He could not be extravagant, but he had a dull impatience of his father's minute supervision. Kate made up her mind that the crash would come in her brother's reign.

She had already looked round the neighbourhood of her home and found no deliverer there. Had there been any one otherwise suitable the Rothwell pride was so notorious that he would never have dreamed of approaching her. An invitation from a girl who had been a school friend offered a possible chance, and Kate coaxed the necessary funds from the old squire, defied her brother's grudging glances, and went, with a secret, passionate resolve to escape from Mitchelhurst for ever. She saw no other way. She was not conscious of any special talent, and she said frankly to herself that she was not sufficiently well educated to be a governess. Moreover, the independence which achieves a scanty living was not her ideal. She was cramped, she was half starved, she wanted to stretch herself in the warmth of the world, and take its good things while she was young.

Fate might have decreed that she should meet Mr. Robert Harding, a

successful man of business in the city, twenty years older than herself, slightly bald, rather stout, keen in his narrow range, but with very little perception of anything which lay right or left of the road by which he was travelling to fortune. The beautiful Miss Rothwell would have thanked Fate and set to work to win him. But it is not only our good resolutions that are the sport of warring chances. Our unworthy schemes do not always ripen into fact. Kate did not meet Mr. Robert Harding, she met his brother Sidney, a tall, bright-eyed, red-lipped young fellow, with the world before him, and the pair fell in love as simply and freshly as if the croquet ground at Balaclava Lodge were the Garden of Eden, or a glade in Arcady. In a week they were engaged to be married, and were both honestly ready to swear that no other marriage had ever been possible for either. To her he appeared with the golden light of the future about his head; to him she came with all the charm and shadowy romance of long descent, and of a poverty far statelier than newly-won wealth. Friends reminded Sidney that with his liberal allowance from his brother, and his prospect of a partnership at twenty-five, he might have married a girl with money had he chosen. Friends also mentioned to Kate, with bated breath, that the Hardings' father, dead twenty years earlier, had been a pork-butcher. Sidney laughed, and Kate turned away in scorn. She was absolutely glad that she could make what the world considered a sacrifice for her darling.

At Mitchelhurst her engagement, though not welcomed, was not strongly opposed. John Rothwell sneered as much as he dared, but he knew his sister's temper, and it was too like his own for him to care to trifle with it. So he stood aside, very wisely, for there was a touch of the lioness about Kate with this new love of hers, and he saw mischief in the eyes that were so sweet while she was thinking about

Sidney. It was at that time that she spoke her word of half-scornful sympathy to Herbert Hayes.

And in a year her married life, with all its tender and softening influences, was over. An accident had killed Sidney Harding before he was twenty-five, before his child was born, and Kate was left alone in comparatively straitened circumstances. For her child's sake she endured her sorrow, demanding almost fiercely of God that He would give her a son to grow up like his dead father, and when the boy was born she called him Reynold. Sidney was too sacred a name; there could be but one Sidney Harding for her, but she remembered that he had once said that he wished he had been called Reynold, after his father.

It was pathetic to see her dark eyes fixed upon the baby features, trying to trace something of Sidney in them, trying hard not to realise that it was her own likeness that was stamped upon her child. "He is darker, of course," she used to say, "but—" He could not be utterly unlike his father, this child of her heart's desire! It was not possible—it must not be—it would be too monstrous a cruelty. But month by month, and year by year, the little one grew into her remembrance of her brother's solitary boyhood, and faced her with a moody temper that mocked her own. No one knew how long she waited for a tone or a glance which should remind her of her dead love, remind her of anything but the old days that she hated. None ever came. The boy grew tall and slim, handsome after the Rothwell type, with a curious instinctive avidity for any details connected with Mitchelhurst and his mother's people. He would not confess his interest, but she divined it and disliked it. And Reynold, on his side, unconsciously resented her eternal unspoken demand for something which he could not give. He would scowl at her over his shoulder, irritated by his certainty that her unsatisfied eyes were upon him. Mother and son were so fatally

alike that they chafed each other continually. Every outbreak of temper was a pitched battle, the combatants knew the ground on which they fought, and every barbed speech was scientifically planted where it would rankle most.

A crisis came when it was decided that Reynold should leave school and go into his uncle's office. The boy did not oppose it by so much as a word; but as he stood, erect and silent, while Mr. Harding enlarged on his prospects, he looked aside for a moment, and Kate's keener eyes caught his contemptuous glance. To her it was an oblique ray, revealing his soul. He despised the Hardings; he was ashamed of his father's name. She did not speak, but in that moment with a pang of furious anguish she chose once and for ever between her husband and her son, and sealed up all her tenderness in Sidney's grave.

Reynold's stay in Robert Harding's office was short, but it was not unsatisfactory while it lasted. He never professed to like his work, but he went resignedly through the daily routine. He was not bright or interested, but he was intelligent. What was explained to him he understood, what was told him he remembered, as a mere matter of course. He acquiesced in his life in a city counting-house, as his grandfather at Mitchelhurst had acquiesced in his narrow existence there. It seemed as if the men of the family were apathetic and weary by nature, and only Kate had had energy enough to revolt.

An unexpected chance, the freak of a rich old man who had business relations with Robert Harding, and who remembered Sidney, made Reynold the possessor of a small legacy a few months after he had entered his uncle's service. He at once announced his intention of going to Oxford. Of course, as he said, without his mother's consent he could not go till he was of age, and if she chose to refuse it he must wait. Kate hesitated, but Mr. Harding, who was full of schemes for

the advancement of his own son, did not care for an unwilling recruit, and the young fellow was coldly permitted to have his way. His mother, in spite of her disapproval, watched his course with an interest which she would never acknowledge. Was he really going to achieve success in his own fashion, perhaps to make the name she loved illustrious?

Nothing was ever more commonplace and unnoticeable than Reynold's university career. He spent his legacy, and came back as little changed as possible. It seemed as if he had felt that he owed himself the education of a gentleman, and had paid the debt, as a mere matter of course, as soon as he had the means. "What do you propose to do now?" Kate inquired. He answered listlessly that he had secured a situation as under-master in a school. And for three or four years he had maintained himself thus, making use of his mother's house in holiday time, or in any interval between two engagements, but never taking anything in the shape of actual coin from her. She suspected that he hated his drudgery, but he never spoke of it.

Thus matters might have remained if it had not been for Robert Harding's son. The old man, whose dream had been to found a great house of business which should bear his name when he was gone, was unlucky enough to have an idle fool for his heir. Reynold's record was not brilliant, but it showed blamelessly by the side of his cousin's folly and extravagance. Mr. Harding hinted more than once that his nephew might come back if he would, but his hints did not seem to be understood. Little by little it became a fixed idea with him that Reynold alone could save the name of Harding, and keep his cousin from utter ruin. He recognised a kind of scornful probity in his nephew, which would secure Gerald's safety in his hands, and perhaps he exaggerated the promise of Reynold's boyhood. At last he stooped to actual solicitation. Kate gave the letter to her son,

silently, but with a breathless question in her eyes.

The old man offered terms which were almost absurdly liberal, but he tried to mask his humiliation by clothing the proposal in dictatorial speech. He gave Reynold a clear week in which to consider his reply, and almost commanded him to take that week. But Mr. Harding wrote, if in ten days he had not signified his acceptance, the situation would be filled up. He should give it, with the promise of the partnership, to a distant connection of his wife's. "Understand," said the final sentence, "that I speak of this matter for the first and last time."

"I think," said Reynold, looking round for writing materials, "that I had better answer this at once."

"Not to say 'No!'" cried Kate. "You shall not!" She stood before him, darkly imperious, with outstretched hand. It seemed to her as if the whole house of Harding appealed to her son for help. He was asked to do the work that Sidney would have done if he had lived. "You shall not insult him by refusing his offer without a moment's thought—I forbid it!" she exclaimed.

"Very well," said Reynold. "I will wait." He turned aside to the fire-place, and stood gazing at the dull red coals.

His mother followed him with her glance, and after a moment's silence she made an effort to speak more gently. "He is your father's brother," she said.

"Yes," Reynold replied, in an absent tone. "Such an offer couldn't come from the other side."

The words were a simple statement of fact, the utterance was absolutely expressionless, but a sudden flame leapt into Kate's eyes. "Answer when and as you please!" she cried. Her son said nothing.

He was waiting at the time to hear about a tutorship which had been mentioned to him. The matter was not likely to be settled immediately, and

the next morning he appeared with his bag in his hand, and announced that he was going into the country for a few days, and would send his address. In due time the letter came with "Mitchelhurst" stamped boldly on it, like a defiance.

When Barbara Strange bade young Harding go and make his fortune, she did not know the curious potency of her advice. The words fell, like a gleam of summer sunshine, across a world of stony antagonisms and smouldering fires. And, with all the bright unconsciousness of sunshine, they transformed it into a place of life and hope. She had called her little cross her talisman, but Harding's talisman—for there are such things—was the folded letter in his pocket-book. As she stood beside him, flushed, eager, radiant, pleading with him, "Could not you care for Mitchelhurst, if—" she awakened a sudden craving for action, a sudden desire of possession in his ice-bound heart. To any other woman he could have been only Reynold Harding, a penniless tutor, recognised, perhaps, as a kind of degenerate offshoot of the Rothwell tree. But to Barbara he was the one remaining hope of the old family of which she had thought so much; he was the king who was to enjoy his own again, and her shining glances bade him go and conquer his kingdom without delay. And in Mitchelhurst Church, as he stood among his dead people, with the rain beating heavily on—

"The lichen-crustled leads above,"

he had made up his mind. He would cast in his lot with the Hardings till he should have earned the right to come back to the Rothwells' inheritance. He would do it, but not for the Rothwells' sake—for a sweeter sake, breathing and moving beside him in that place of tombs. He looked up at the marble countenance of his wiggled ancestor, considering it thoughtfully, yet not asking himself if that dignified personage would have

approved of his resolution. Reynold, as he stared at the aquiline features, wondered idly whether the lean-faced gentleman had ever known and loved a Barbara Strange, and whether he had kissed her with those thin, curved lips of his. Of course they were not as grimy and pale in real life as in their sculptured likeness. And yet it was difficult to picture him alive, with blood in his veins, stooping to anything as warm and sweet as Barbara's damask-rose mouth. It seemed to Reynold that only he and Barbara, in all the world, were truly alive, and he only since he had known her.

When he went back into the lanes alone, after leaving her at the gate, the full meaning of the decision which had swiftly and strangely reversed the whole drift of his life rushed upon him and bewildered him. He hastened away like one in a dream. It was as if he had broken through an encircling wall into light and air. Ever since his boyhood he had held his fancy tightly curbed, he had reminded himself by night and day that he had nothing, was nothing, would be nothing; in his fierce rejection of empty dreams he had chosen always to turn his eyes from the wonderful labyrinthine world about him, and to fix them on the dull grey thread of his hopeless life. Now for the first time in his remembrance he relaxed his grasp, and his fancy, freed from all control, flashed forward to visions of love and wealth. He let it go—why should he hinder it, since he had resolved to follow where it led? In this sudden exaltation his resolution seemed half realised in its very conception, and as he gathered the berries from the darkening hedgerows he felt as if they were his own, the first-fruits of his inheritance. He hurried from briar to briar under the pale evening sky, tearing the rain-washed sprays from their stems, hardly recognising himself in the man who was so defiantly exultant in his self-abandonment. Nothing seemed out of reach, nothing seemed impossible. When the dark-

ness overtook him he went back with a triumphant rhythm in his swinging stride, feeling as if he could have gathered the very stars out of the sky for Barbara.

This towering mood did not last. It was in the nature of things that such loftiness should be insecure, and indeed Reynold could hardly have made a successful man of business had it been permanent. It would not do to add up Barbara and the stars in every column of figures. But the very fact of passing from the open heavens to the shelter of a roof had a sobering effect, the process of dressing for dinner recalled all the commonplace necessities of life, and in his haste he had a difficulty with his white necktie, which was distinctly a disenchantment. The shyness and reserve which were the growth of years could not be shaken off in a moment of passion. They closed round him more oppressively than ever when he found himself in the yellow drawing-room, face to face with Mr. Hayes, and, being questioned about his walk, he answered stiffly and coldly, and then was silent. Yet enough of the exaltation remained to kindle his eyes, though his lips were speechless, when he caught sight of Barbara standing by the fire-side, with a cluster of blood-red berries in her hair, and another nestling in the dusky folds of lace close to her white throat. The vivid points of colour held his fascinated gaze, and seemed to him like glowing kisses.

He had a game of chess with his host after dinner. As a rule he was a slow and meditative player, scanning the pieces doubtfully, and suspecting a snare in every promising chance. But that evening he played as if by instinct, without hesitation. Everything was clear to him, and he pressed his adversary closely. Mr. Hayes frowned over his calculations, apprehending defeat, though the game as yet had taken no decisive turn. Presently Barbara came softly sweeping towards them in her black draperies, set down her uncle's coffee-cup at his

elbow, and paused by Harding's side to watch the contest. Her presence sent a thrill through him which disturbed his clear perception of the game. It made a bright confusion in his mind, such as a ripple makes in lucid waters. He put out his hand mechanically towards the pawn which he had previously determined to move.

"Dear me!" said Barbara, strong in the traditional superiority of the looker on, "why don't you move your bishop?"

Reynold moved his bishop.

Quick as lightning Mr. Hayes made his answering move, and, when it was an accomplished fact, he said—

"Thank you, Barbara."

Reynold and Barbara looked at each other. The aspect of affairs was entirely changed. A white knight occupied a previously guarded square, and simply offered a ruinous choice of calamities.

"Oh, what have I done?" the girl exclaimed.

Reynold laughed his little rough-edged laugh.

"Nothing," he said. "Don't blame yourself, Miss Strange. You only asked me why I didn't move my bishop. I ought to have explained why I *didn't*. Instead of which—I *did*. It certainly wasn't your fault."

Barbara lingered and bit her underlip as she gazed at the board.

"I've spoilt your game," she said remorsefully. "I think I'd better go now I've done the mischief."

"No, don't go!" Harding exclaimed, and Mr. Hayes, rubbing his hands, chimed in with a mocking—

"No, don't go, Barbara!"

The girl looked down with an angry spark in her eyes.

"Well, I'll give you some coffee," she said to the young man; "you haven't had any yet."

"And then come back, Barbara!" her uncle persisted.

She did come back, flushed and defiant, determined to fight the battle

to the last. But for her obstinacy Mr. Hayes would have had an easy triumph, for young Harding's defence collapsed utterly. Apparently he could not play a losing game, and a single knock-down blow discouraged him once for all. Barbara, taking her place by his side, showed twice his spirit, and at one time seemed almost as if she were about to retrieve his fallen fortunes. Mr. Hayes ceased to taunt her, and sat with a puckered forehead considering his moves. He kept his advantage, however, in spite of all she could do, and presently unclosed his lips to say "Check!" at intervals. But it was not till he had uttered the fatal "Mate!" that his face relaxed. Then he got up, and made his niece a little bow.

"Thank you, Barbara!" he said, and walked away to the fire-place.

The young people remained where he had left them. Barbara trifled with the chessmen, moving them capriciously here and there. Reynold, with his head on his hand, did not lift his eyes above the level of the board, but watched her slim fingers as they slipped from piece to piece, or lingered on the red-stained ivory. She brought back all their slain combatants, and set them up upon the battle-field.

"I wish I hadn't meddled!" she said suddenly. "I spoilt your game."

She spoke in a low voice, and Reynold answered in the same tone,

"What *did* it matter?"

"No, but I hate to be beaten. I wanted you to win."

"Well," said he, still with his head down, "you set me to play a bigger game to-day."

"Ah!" said Barbara, decidedly.

"I won't meddle with that!"

"No?" he said, looking up with a half-hinted smile. Her cheeks were still burning with the excitement of her long struggle, and her bright eyes met his questioning glance.

"Perhaps you think I can't help meddling?" she suggested.

"Perhaps you can't. You are

superstitious, aren't you? You believe in amulets and that kind of thing—or half believe. Perhaps you are foredoomed to meddle, and destiny won't let you set me down to the game and go quietly away."

Barbara was holding the king between her fingers. She replaced it on its square so absently, while she looked at Reynold, that it fell. His words seemed to trouble her.

"Well, if this game is an omen, you had better not *let me meddle*," she said at last.

"How am I to help it?"

"Thank you!" she exclaimed resentfully; "I'm not so eager to interfere in your affairs as you seem to take for granted!"

"Indeed I thought nothing of the kind. I thought we were talking of destiny. And, you see, you were good enough to take a little interest this afternoon."

She uttered a half-reluctant "Yes." She had a dim feeling that she was, in some inexplicable way, becoming involved in young Harding's fortunes.

The notion half-frightened, half-fascinated her. When they began their low-voiced talk she had unconsciously leaned a little towards him. Now she did not precisely withdraw, but she lifted her face, and there was a touch of shy defiance in the poise of her head.

Mr. Hayes, as he stood by the fire, was warming first one little polished shoe, and then the other, and contemplating the blazing logs.

"Barbara," he said suddenly, "did we have this wood from Jackson? It burns much better than the last."

Barbara was the little housekeeper again in a moment. She crossed the room, and explained that it was not Jackson's wood, but some of a load which Mr. Green had asked them to take. "You said I could do as I pleased," she added, "and I thought they looked very nice logs when they came."

"Green—ah! Jacob Green knows what he's about. Made you pay, I dare say. No, no matter." The girl's eyes had gone to a little table, where an account-book peeped out from under a bit of coloured embroidery. "I'm not complaining; I don't care about a few extra shillings, if things are good. Get Green to send you some more when this is burnt out."

Reynold had risen when Barbara left him, and after lingering for a moment, a tall black and white figure in the lamplight by the chess-board, he followed her, and took up his position on the rug. The interruption to their talk had been unwelcome, but it was not, in itself, unpleasant. He liked to see Barbara playing the part of the lady of the Place. It was a sweet foreshadowing of the home, the dear home, that should one day be. There should be logs enough on the hearths of Mitchelhurst in October nights to come, and, though the fields and copses round might be wet and chill, the old house should be filled to overflowing with brightness and warmth and love. Some wayfarer, plodding along the dark road, would pause and look up the avenue, and see the lights shining in the windows beyond the leafless trees. Reynold pictured this, and pictured the man's feelings as he gazed. It was curious how, by a kind of instinct, he put himself in the outsider's place. He did not know that he always did so, but in truth he had never dreamed anything for himself till Barbara taught him, and his old way of looking at life was not to be unlearned in a day. Still he was happy enough as he stood there, staring at the fire, and thinking of those illuminated windows.

He could not sleep when he went to bed that night. The head which he laid on the chilly softness of his pillow was full of a joyous riot of waking visions, and he closed his eyes on the shadows only to see a girl's shining glances and rose-flushed cheeks.

To be continued.

REVIEW OF THE MONTH.

THE aspect of national affairs is losing none of its gravity, and the distractions of the state are rather multiplying than dispersing. The clouds of external difficulty are growing heavier on the horizon, and the political situation internally seems to be drawing slowly towards a crisis. It is idle to narrow the explanation of such a state of things within the commonplace re-creminations of rival faction. We are borne upon a larger tide of circumstance than can be fathomed by the plummet of party. It is not beyond the bounds of what is possible that we are on the eve of great and costly expeditions, of war in many parts of the globe, of a violent rupture with our nearest neighbour, of large extensions of the Empire, and of a destructive strain on more than one of our most cherished institutions. It may be that the operation of many outside forces and the minds of men in other countries are moving in this direction with a certainty that no dexterity of statesmanship within our own borders can resist. Nobody can be satisfied that these formidable events are impossible or even altogether improbable. They may not come to pass, but then they may. The bare prospect may well make every one among us watch the motion of the hands of the great political horologe with an anxiety more sharp than has been known before in this generation.

The famous line, "*merses profundo, pulchrior evenit*," is as true of the Englishman as it was of the old Roman—the deeper you plunge him into difficulty the more admirable does he show. Seasoned and unexcitable politicians agree that the difficulties of to-day have not been surpassed within modern memory, and we may

very soon have a chance of seeing whether in judgment, courage, and resolution the men of the present are not the equals of their forefathers in the past. Even if it were true that no one of our troubles is of superlative dimensions, the combination of them makes a whole that is full of vexation and of danger. Our embarrassments in Egypt are serious enough, and though a resolute course is the only plan by which we can shake ourselves free from them, it is a great mistake to think that even a resolute course, whether towards annexation or evacuation, is easy to pursue, or that it will not create fresh embarrassments of its own. But Egypt does not stand alone. Affairs on the Congo have taken a new, surprising, and disquieting turn. Here again we are face to face with France, under circumstances of which a very little time back nobody in this country was dreaming. The International Association, which was fondly supposed to have been founded by the King of the Belgians with a view to the opening up of Africa on beneficent and enlightened principles of a bran-new type, and which was recognised by the United States as a sort of independent and friendly government on that understanding, now appears to have made a private bargain with France of very remarkable purport and effect. The Association is to proceed on its appointed way, doing its work, and settling its acquisitions on the Congo; but if, for causes not more particularly described, the Association should be driven to abandon its mission, then it agrees to give France the refusal of its possessions. It may be that this curious agreement is of no actual significance, and will come to nothing within any period such as we need concern ourselves about. But it

is enough to show what strong currents are moving underneath the surface. The strong feeling in our own country against the recognition of Portuguese claims on the Congo is a measure of the strength of British commercial interests in that region, and these interests will not fail to make themselves heard against the more menacing arrangement that is now announced. The Germans, on the other hand, are showing some signs that they too feel concern in these matters, and if the signs really prove to mean anything, and if Prince Bismarck puts his heavy finger into the African pie, then our affairs will indeed need more careful steering than the reckless preachers of our Forward school are dreaming of in their harum-scarum philosophy.

If trouble is thus brewing in Central Africa, less serious but still extremely tiresome causes of perturbation have revived in Southern Africa. The confusions of Zululand, which have, in fact, never ceased since the first calamitous interference with Cetawayo, have become more confounded. The Reserve and the British Resident, and even Natal itself, are all represented as being in peril more or less imminent, from the internecine conflict among the Zulu tribes, and it is said that the movement is complicated and embittered by the invasion of Zululand by free-booting Boers whom the Transvaal government is too weak to control on the Zulu border, as we know that it was too weak to control them on the Bechuana border. It is now perceived to have been a great blunder in the first instance to have had a Reserve and a Resident. There were arguments in favour of such a compromise, no doubt. There always are, in favour of all compromises. But the temporary convenience is dearly purchased at the cost of future entanglements, and these entanglements now hold us fast. The British Government is urged to accept the duty of preventing all these sanguinary disorders, and "securing good govern-

ment" for the savages who are engaged in a struggle of extermination, just as it is urged with equal peremptoriness to undertake the same duty in the Soudan, on the Gold Coast, and in most other parts of the habitable globe. Circumstances seem almost to be reducing to a bitter absurdity the doctrine so passionately held in many quarters, that wherever there is disorder or wrong, it is the business of the people of Great Britain, heedless of cost or of proportion between means and ends, to impose order and enforce right. One gentleman wishes the Foreign Office "to use firm language" to the Dutch Government, because some poor shipwrecked sailors are captives in the hands of the Rajah of Sumatra, in a region over which the Dutch claim sovereignty; and the firm language means in truth an expedition for their rescue. The expedition would probably lead to the death of the unfortunate men, and there is no reason why we should not then feel it our imperative duty to annex Sumatra and rescue the native races from the oppression of the Dutch. There is no end to the splendid follies to which we may be thus reduced by the canting logic of the day.

If so many ticklish affairs are pressing on us from without, the sky is far from being clear within. The business of the session advances slowly, but that is not the worst of it. The Franchise Bill, which is beyond all comparison, whether for good or for evil, the most important article in the programme, moves tardily but surely through the water. The affirmation of the propriety of dealing with franchise first, and apart from redistribution, by a majority of 130, and the resolution to include Ireland within the scope of its operation by a majority of 195, show, beyond all possibility of misapprehension, that the mind not only of Parliament but of the constituencies is made up on this great subject. In face of this manifestation, it has been spread

abroad on authority that the Opposition in the House of Lords will meet the second reading with a resolution which, while recognising the necessity for some extension of the suffrage, will, if accepted, be tantamount to a rejection of the Bill. The plea on which this very strong measure is justified, is that the Opposition honestly believe the Government to have forfeited the confidence of the nation; and with this opinion they naturally and confessedly are on the watch for an opportunity to compel Ministers to put its validity to the test by a general election.

It is not, however, easy to see how the rejection of the Franchise Bill by the Lords would put this compulsion on the Government. No Ministers have ever recognised the doctrine that defeat in the non-representative Chamber implies want of confidence on the part of the Chamber that is representative. It would be a novelty to give to the Chamber which has no constituencies, the power of forcing an appeal to the constituencies at its own good will and pleasure. Few even of those who set most value on the Upper House have raised any such pretensions as this. And what would happen, we may pretty certainly conjecture, would be that the Ministers would send up the Bill a second time in an autumn session. So much is tolerably clear. It would be a perfectly constitutional, legitimate, and political course, to give the Lords a chance of reconsidering a measure which their leaders have (rather indiscreetly) promised to throw out before they had either deliberated upon it, or had a chance of finding out what the House of Commons thought and wished about it. But a struggle between Lords and Commons means a warm autumn and a perfervid winter. That will not make the strong conduct of delicate foreign relations any easier or simpler, though it may possibly be that, if our people are recalled in this way to the fact that they have a few affairs of their own to attend to, they may prac-

tise a little wholesome and sorely-needed indifference to the affairs of people some thousands of miles away. It is not a defeat on the Franchise Bill in the Lords that the Queen's Ministers have to fear. That, as clear-sighted Conservatives are well aware, will strengthen rather than weaken them. It will be to give the Ministerial party the very ground of battle that they would themselves deliberately choose. The danger lies not here at all, but in a defeat or a too narrow majority on some point in their Egyptian policy. That might force a dissolution at an hour's notice.

The chief Parliamentary struggle of the month was short, and in some senses it may be called indecisive, but it brought into prominence pregnant issues that have still to be fought out for many a long day to come. For the purposes of the administration a majority of eight-and-twenty over a combination of Conservatives and Irish Nationalists may be pronounced adequate and sufficient. In older times it would have passed for a triumph. But it marks a decline, whether temporary or not, in the Parliamentary if not in the popular, strength of the present Government. It is true that from the first, in spite of all that has been said about mechanical majorities, the Government has had a less commanding influence over its adherents in the House of Commons than over its supporters in the country. In the case of the Irish Land Act, members on its own side pressed hostile amendments; and the Crimes Act was made more severe than Ministers thought necessary at the instance, not of Conservatives, but of Liberals. In the various motions arising out of the Northampton election, they were systematically abandoned by many of their friends; and on the Affirmation Bill they were beaten. In July last the resolution in favour of greater restriction upon the importation of foreign cattle was passed in their teeth by 202 against

192. Only a month ago the Ministerial proposal on this subject, contained in Mr. Dodson's amendment, was rejected by 185 to 161. At the end of March, in the present session, a resolution declaring urgency for the re-adjustment of local taxation was carried against them by 208 against 197. The list of these checks might easily be prolonged, but enough has been said to show that no majority can less fairly be called mechanical than the gentlemen who now sit on the right of the Speaker. From this point of view, then, in the defeat of the Vote of Censure on the morning of May 14th, the Government did well enough, though there was a diminution by twenty-one from the majority on the preceding Vote of Censure in February last.

Nor can it be contended that the type and quality of those on their own side who declined to support the Government make the defection really significant as a mark of public opinion. Mr. Goschen is a man of singular acuteness of intelligence, much ability in certain kinds of public business, and thoroughly versed in affairs, but how little he can be in harmony with the opinion of his political friends is shown by his honest, but desperate, attitude in respect of the extension of the franchise. Mr. Forster, on the other hand, has really popular fibre in him, and he has a faculty of moral indignation which, if its effect were not marred by a suspicion, just or unjust, of personal resentments—as well as by a very equivocal record both in the Education controversy and in his troublous Irish administration—might have shaken the country as Mr. Bright has known how to shake it—with the difference, however, that one has always been for the sedate courses of peace, while the other has become a systematic preacher of the meddlings that lead to war. As it is, so long, at least, as the present Prime Minister remains in the front of affairs, Mr. Forster's influence is hardly even secondary, and is certainly not equal

to the task, even if he had the inclination, of directing a great secession.

Although, however, the defection on the Vote of Censure was not of the first importance, it has not improbably had the effect of aggravating what has been the great fault of the present Ministry almost from the beginning of their existence, and certainly ever since Egyptian troubles reached the acute stage. That fault has been lack of faith in their own judgment. It is as if each meeting of the Cabinet had opened with a unanimous vote of want of confidence in themselves. They have been too easily frightened, too deferential to a certain impostor going under the assumed name of Public Opinion. In foreign affairs, it will most likely be found that the popular constituencies who are the future masters of the country both desire and expect a strong lead from their chiefs. What the defections on the Vote of Censure have probably done is to make this energetic initiative more remote than ever.

It is not unfair to include among the multitudinous difficulties of the time the weakness and division of the Opposition. No sensible man would make too much of the quarrels which have during the month amused one party and vexed another, between Lord Randolph Churchill and the older heads of the political connection of which he has made himself an extremely important member. Such quarrels might pass for the mere effervescence that has always been common enough when men are not forced into self-control by the heavy and complicated responsibilities of office. A long spell of the cold shade of opposition is naturally trying to temper, and explosions of spleen under such circumstances ought not to be taken for more than they are worth. Nor ought reconciliations, on the other hand, to be taken for more than they are worth. The *diable boiteux* in Le Sage's novel describes a renewal of friendship between

himself and another spirit: "We were reunited, we embraced, and we have hated each other heartily ever since." Such things have happened many a time before now among political allies, who in spite of hearty hatreds have still been able to co-operate very usefully for the public service. It was a much graver circumstance when a schism revealed itself in open day upon an issue of policy of real and substantial moment. Whether it be prudence or madness to increase the number of voters in Ireland by 200 per cent., we must all agree that it is to take a very important step. Nobody will deny that it is a step on which a party and its most conspicuous members ought to have made up their minds one way or another. There can be no doubt as to the view which the bulk of the Conservative party take of this proposal; they would hardly deserve their name if they took any view but one. It was, then, with perplexity bordering on stupefaction that people listened to Lord Randolph Churchill deriding his leaders for their stupidity in fearing to extend the franchise in Ireland, and afterwards taking nearly a dozen gentlemen from his side of the House of Commons into the Ministerial lobby, while several of the principal men in the party, including the leader, abstained from voting either for or against. If we consider the vital importance of Irish policy to the commonwealth at the present time and for a very long time to come, the revelation of such discordant counsels as these in respect of it, is a heavy blow to public confidence in the party where they have broken loose.

Conscious of these weaknesses in his own ranks, Lord Salisbury has made a suggestion which, coming from one of his authority, is singular, and if it had come from any one else would hardly have received a moment's consideration. We do not want you to put us into office, he says, but you ought to get rid of the peccant elements in the present Administration,

and reconstruct the Government on such a basis as will allow of a firmer and more consistent management of affairs in Egypt. But when we proceed to look into the practicability of such a notion, it is seen to be devoid of all possible substance. The present Ministry is Mr. Gladstone. To transform it, is to banish him. But whither and how? To expel him would be to rend the party in two, and how could the surviving remnant continue in office with the support of one section of the party only, and the doubtfully benevolent neutrality of the other? To fill up the offices with men of sufficient ability would not be difficult. But would the rank and file obey? Mr. Forster was once designated as leader of the party; he would be the proper person to carry out the Egyptian policy which Lord Salisbury thinks expedient; but where would he find adherents enough to enable him effectively to carry on affairs, and what would become of that firm union which is absolutely indispensable to the strong Government that Lord Salisbury craves? Besides, there is no evidence that one section of the present Cabinet has a different policy from any other; or that if one or half-a-dozen of its members were purged from it, those who would be left have any particular clue that might lead us out of the terrible Egyptian maze.

It is true that no one of his colleagues is so deeply and irretrievably committed against a policy of annexation as Mr. Gladstone is, and his departure would of course make such a policy easier. But, for this very reason, it is inconceivable that he should consent to efface himself in order to make things smooth for steps which he, whether rightly or wrongly, has always denounced as fraught with disaster to the Empire. Nor is he likely to overlook the effect which his retirement at the present juncture would have upon the peace of Europe. Under him England may not be feared, but she is trusted. An Italian journal truly describes the

foreign view of his policy:—"The fall of the Gladstone Ministry, which is pacific, just, conciliatory to all, and tolerant towards the restless ambition of France, would arouse well-founded apprehensions throughout Europe, and would result in a radical change of English policy, which, from being yielding and pacific, would become resentful, enterprising, bellicose, and exacting on all questions in which England supposes she has present or future interests." Whether this interpretation of a change of Government be true or not, it is certain that it prevails upon the Continent of Europe. Lord Salisbury is too well-informed to be ignorant of it, and it is his knowledge of it that makes him admit the objections that exist to the accession of his own party to power.

The Egyptian darkness does not become less obscure as our eyes grow more accustomed to the absence of light. Relentless efforts are made to flog up national passion in a case which more than any other in our history needs to be judged with reason and self-possession. Alarming stories are fabricated, exciting projects are invented, all sorts of military designs are boldly launched. Every scrap of news from the Soudan, however unauthenticated, however improbable, however certain to be demolished the next day, is worked up into an inflammatory stimulant. On the whole, these frenzied attempts to kindle international jealousy, and to light the fires of territorial covetousness, are plainly and rapidly failing. Those who would have us violate our pledges to Europe for the sake of loading ourselves with the nuisance and the burden of governing Egypt are making no impression. They have, however, one trump card in their hands, and it is a high one. General Gordon is still, so far as we know, in Khartoum, in the midst of what he has called a "trumpery revolt." Fresh material for excitement is to be found in the mission of Admiral Hewett to

Abyssinia. His object is to persuade King John to help a British force to march from Massowah by way of Kassala to the Nile. The Admiral has not yet reached the King, and he has been received with no good will by the population. It is impossible not to follow the mission with anxiety. Admiral Hewett has the reputation of being an able man in his profession, but he is known to be peremptory and high-handed, and it remains to be seen how King John will take peremptory and high-handed ways. It remains to be seen, too, whether the British agent has terms to offer which the King may care to take. It is at least to be apprehended that the mission gives the King a good chance of driving a harder bargain.

The deliverance of General Gordon, if bitterly acquiesced in by some as a deplorable if inevitable sequel to his original despatch, and if heedlessly welcomed by others as the satisfaction of a chivalrous sympathy with a "great personality," is of course hailed with secret enthusiasm by those who are always hungering and thirsting after more territory, heavier responsibilities, and new fields for national enterprise. To them the predicament into which General Gordon has been permitted to get himself and his country is a godsend. Their only fear is lest some comparatively light expedition up the Nile should answer the purpose, and so the blessed opportunity of a permanent entanglement in the Soudan be allowed to pass away. Not the Nile, on any account, they cry. Khartoum can be best approached and most effectively aided from Suakin and the coast of the Red Sea. "Suakin means Berber, and Berber means Khartoum, while Khartoum means the key to the control of all that is worth holding in the Soudan, and the open door to Central Africa. A steamer trip up the Nile would be open to the serious objections that, although it might bring away Gordon, and even the most faithful of

his followers, it could not remove the entire garrison and the loyal population, still less the isolated garrisons at remoter points. The moral effect, even if success rewarded the little excursion, would be *nil*—indeed worse—for to rescue Gordon and then to retire would be to proclaim to all the Soudanese that Egypt and civilisation had finally washed their hands of them." The right thing, then, is a railway from Suakin to Berber, with a view primarily to the relief of Gordon and the garrisons, and next with a view to the permanent control if not possession of Khartoum. There is the cloven foot. We are not only to take over the government of Egypt, but also that frightful dependency which it has been one of the curses of Egypt to have acquired. There can be no sort of doubt that the presence of an expeditionary force at Khartoum will be made a fresh starting-point for arguments against abandoning it. The idea has already been put into circulation that General Gordon should remain in the Soudan for an indefinite time, and be left, if he pleases, to create a sort of independent kingdom for himself. What that would mean Sir Evelyn Baring has plainly forewarned us, and if we fall into so wretched a trap, it will be our own deliberate fault.

"In the first place, I doubt its practicability, if General Gordon be left to his own unaided resources. There can, I think, now be no doubt that the extent of General Gordon's personal influence in the Soudan was overrated, both by himself and by public opinion in England. It is very questionable whether he would be able to establish any government unless a military force were sent to assist him. But, even if the scheme be practicable, it appears to me to be open to very great political objections. . . . If an Englishman became ruler of the Soudan he would soon call out for other Englishmen to help him. Public opinion in England would demand the creation of a government in the Soudan which would be in harmony with European ideas of civilisation, and a constant pressure would be exerted to do away with slavery—a reform which would not be accomplished for a very long time to come without the aid of material force. I should much fear that a condition of things would then be

created from which it would result that England would, in some form or other, become virtually responsible for the government of the Soudan; and this, as it appears to me, is precisely the solution which, above all others, should be avoided."

The size of the Soudan has been conveniently represented to our imagination by the statement that if you draw a line from St. Petersburg to Bordeaux, and another line from London to Constantinople, you will intersect a country about the size of the Soudan. Further, if you were to take away 19-20ths of the population of the districts of Europe within the area above described, and deserts of rock and sand varying from 50,000 to 150,000 square miles were thrown in, that would give you a picture of the Soudan. The Indian Under-Secretary, when he warned Parliament of the magnitude of the task implied in marches to Khartoum, added to the above figures a quotation from Sir S. Baker, which gives us an idea of what a Soudanese desert is like: "A few hours from Korosko," says Baker, "the misery of the scene surpassed description. Glowing like a furnace, the vast extent of yellow sand stretched to the horizon. As far as the eye could reach were waves like a stormy sea—grey, cold-looking waves in the burning heat, but no drop of water; it appeared as though a sudden curse had turned the raging sea to stone." This is hardly a land in which either English generals or English statesmen will choose to involve themselves if they can avoid it, or for a day longer than they can help.

Even in the way of the temporary expedition from Suakin to Berber, which it is the fashion to speak of with so light a heart, the difficulties are enormous. They have been set forth in accurate detail by the able correspondent of the *Standard* at Cairo, and for people who have a fancy for realising what they are talking about, his version of things is worth more than the hurried consideration that most readers give to

the morning's telegrams. There are two routes proposed, he says, by which the relieving force might advance to Khartoum. The first is by Korosko to Berber, *via* Aboo Hamad. By this route we need only say that the troops would have to cross 200 miles of the terrible desert described by Sir S. Baker in the passage we have quoted above, without a drop of water except a single well in the middle which is only fit for camels to drink at. Let us look at the other. On the Suakin to Berber route, the *Standard* tells us, it is possible that sufficient water might be found to water the beasts, but every drop necessary for the men would have to be carried. The distance is 250 miles, or twenty-five days' march. The greater part of the road is through mountainous defiles. The 106 miles at the end of the journey have only one watering place, containing wells enough for the beasts alone between. The allowance for each soldier is one gallon per diem. It has been reckoned that the weight of his water and food is thirteen pounds a day. For twenty-five days his rations therefore weigh 325 pounds, or twenty-five pounds more than the burden of a camel on a long march. We must, therefore, be prepared to provide a camel per man. That is not all. It does not take into account loss of camels or waste of water. At Suakin it was found that in carrying fifty gallons of water from the base to the first stockade—a distance of eighteen miles—one gallon was wasted. "In order, therefore, to ensure a sufficient supply it would be necessary to have at least three camels to two men. For a force of 10,000 men we should, therefore, need 15,000 camels. But it is necessary to have at least one driver to every three camels, which adds 5,000 drivers to this force, who also would need more camels to carry their food. Finally, 20,000 camels might, perhaps, equip the force were they self-feeding, but then there comes the question of who is to carry the food for the camels. It is reckoned

that, with the scanty grazing they can find, each camel would require at least twenty-six pounds of fodder once in two days. Again, therefore, we find that the camel cannot even carry his own food for a twenty-five days' march."

That is a somewhat sobering story; but it is not all. Nearly the whole route from Suakin to Berber lies through defiles where, perhaps, two camels can walk abreast. The marching column would therefore stretch along for miles, hemmed in and exposed to attack. The despatch of the force in dribbles of five hundred would be suicidal; but, on the other hand, what would be the use of a larger army, where one part of it would be unable to come to the aid of the rest? "Has any one ever considered the gigantic task of loading and unloading thousands of camels; or the position of the troops if attacked whilst this operation was going on? It may be stated that it would take six hours to load and unload, and thus a twenty-five days' march might be prolonged to one of thirty days, or more. And what would such a prolongation mean? It would simply mean starvation and death by thirst of the whole army." To start without the most perfectly organised Commissariat and Transport must bring disaster. The expense would be enormous. Finally, there would be no returning to the base. It would be the advance of a flying column through an enemy's country. A man on falling sick might just as well be shot and put under ground. "There will be no possibility of halting or erecting shelter-tents in the race across the desert against starvation. Sun-fever and heat-apoplexy are what may be expected. The treatment necessary for such cases will be next to impossible. One-fifth or one-sixth of the whole force travelling under the conditions proposed would probably die on the road."

This is a sufficiently sombre picture. It may be that the circumstances are taken at their worst, and painted in

the darkest possible colours. But there is at least the possibility. There is not a single item of the writer's calculation which might not prove to be borne out by fact. Some may think that we are bound at all hazards to undertake such an expedition, whatever misery and horror might arise from it. It may be so. Only let people know what it is they are about.

If it is said that a force ought to have been sent earlier—the answer is complete. It is true that in the first week of March General Gordon advised the despatch of a small force of British or Indian cavalry to Berber, as soon as the road was opened between that place and Suakin. But Sir E. Baring did not approve this proposal. The object of the expedition was to overawe the tribes between Berber and Khartoum, and reassure the population of the towns. But according to Lord Granville, the military information in the possession of the Government "showed that it was unsafe to send a small body of cavalry from Suakin, and impossible to send a large force. They could not, therefore, authorise the advance of any troops in the direction of Berber until they were informed of the military conditions on which it was to be made, and were satisfied that the expedition was necessary for General Gordon's safety, and would be confined to that purpose." This decision was reconsidered on learning that General Gordon was still expecting the arrival of troops at Berber, but having regard to the danger of the climate and the extraordinary military risk, the Government did not feel justified in altering it.

The position in short was this. General Gordon had gone to Khartoum with a given mission. After he had been there a certain time he conceived—for good reasons or bad—a new view of his mission, vastly enlarging its scope, and wholly changing its objects. He had gone to bring away the garrisons; he wished to stay in order to put down

the Mahdi; he desired the despatch of a force as likely to help to this end. The question, then, is simply this, whether a military subordinate is to be allowed to dictate a policy to the civil Government, and to be free to use strong language against his masters if they think twice before giving him whatever he may choose to ask. What makes the strong language in this case particularly unreasonable is, that the very course which, in an impetuous moment, General Gordon stigmatised as an "indelible disgrace," had been suggested to the Government by himself. "I leave to you," he says, "the indelible disgrace of abandoning the garrisons of Sennaar, Kassala, Berber, &c." Yet on March 9 he had said that under such and such circumstances the Government had better instruct him to evacuate Khartoum. "You would understand," he adds, "that such a step would mean the sacrificing of all outlying places except Berber and Dongola." That is to say, he acquiesced in, and even invited the very course which he afterwards called disgraceful. But that is not the question. We are all as well able as General Gordon to judge what is disgraceful. The question is, we repeat, whether statesmen or soldiers are to settle the enterprises on which the nation is to embark. We are for the statesman, however infirm of purpose, against the soldier, however heroic in intention. The Government departed from the paths of calculation, foresight, circumspection, and practical common sense when they despatched General Gordon, and they are not expiating that grave fault more bitterly than it deserves.

Such, then, are the circumstances under which the British Government is going into a Conference with the other great European Powers on the most critical branch of the Egyptian question. It is no exaggeration to say that for us it may easily come to be far the most important diplomatic gathering of this century. We go

into the Conference with military difficulties on our hands in the Soudan, and possibly in Zululand; with diplomatic difficulties in respect of French convicts in the Pacific, and French designs on the Congo and elsewhere; and with party and Parliamentary difficulties within a stone's throw of the room where it is expected that the Conference will be held. Of all these difficulties, by the way, and certainly not excepting the last, the representatives at the Conference will be perfectly aware. The prospect stirs the hopes of some and the fears of others. The Conference, whatever else it may do, must in the end define the position of England in Egypt, and bring to a close a suspense that has for some time been intolerable. It will either leave us fastened up in Egypt for ever, or it will once more restore Egypt to its proper place as a great European and international concern. Supposing the deliberations of the Conference to be rigorously limited to financial objects, and to secure the required changes in the Law of Liquidation, the creditors will insist on some sort of supervision of the bankrupt estate, and that is the real issue. If England desires to acquire a protectorate, she may be able to gain her ends by paying for it, and by guaranteeing the public debt of the country. For it would be irrational to suppose that we should guarantee a shilling, unless we have a full and undisputed title to regulate the administration. Whether we agree to guarantee the whole debt, or to advance the eight millions required for the floating debt, or to allow the prospective increment of our dividends on the Canal shares to be made a security for the new loan,—on any supposition we should be committing ourselves by a direct material interest to a responsible superintendence of the Egyptian Government, and it would be our duty, as well as our right, to make ourselves definitely masters in the country. It is impossible, however,

that Mr. Gladstone, of all men in the world, can design the establishment of a protectorate under this or any other plea. Nor, if this had been his aim, would it have been either necessary or expedient to invite the Powers to a Conference. His view of the relations of Egypt to England is not that it is an acquisition to be coveted, but a burden, a weakness, and a danger, to be at almost any cost avoided. That being so, it is not readily to be believed that the end of these negotiations will leave us with responsibilities made at once larger and more definite, or with pretensions, that have hitherto been systematically disavowed, now boldly proclaimed by us, and tamely accepted by France and by Russia.

Events elsewhere have made the present a peculiarly inopportune moment for throwing overboard a moderate and conciliatory policy. A month ago it seemed as if France were on the eve of a war with China. Prince Kung had been disgraced, and the war party at Peking were triumphant. France was believed to be insisting on an indemnity for the expenses of the war in Tonquin, virtually in the shape of a cession by China to France of territory beyond the borders of Tonquin. Bellicose writers in the Parisian press were calling for the infliction of an exemplary humiliation on the barbarians, and used very much the counterpart of the inflammatory arguments with which we are painfully familiar from similarly injudicious gentry at home. M. Ferry, fortunately, under a plain and unimpressive mien, has strong sense and a will of his own. The same good sense must somehow have come to prevail in the counsels of the Chinese Government—strange as it is that good sense should be listened to when the mischievous fires of national jealousy have once been fairly set alight. Li Hung Chang, like Walpole, Fleury, Peel, and other great peace Ministers in the Western hemisphere,

believes that prudence is no small part of national valour, and he persuaded the Empress to be of his own mind. France did not maintain her pretensions to an indemnity at the expense of the territorial integrity of the Chinese empire. China is formally to recognise the protectorate of France over Tonquin and Annam within their present boundaries. The great provinces which stretch along the southern frontier of China—Yunnan, Quang-si, and Quang-tung—from Burmah on the west to the Fo-kien and Formosa Channels in the east, are to be opened to French trade. A glance at the map will show the reader that unless and until those trade routes are effectually opened, which have so often been talked about, through Burmah to the Gulf of Bengal, the trade of the two more western of the three provinces will tend to flow through Tonquin. Tonquin is rich in agricultural resources; with Annam and Cochinchina it contains no fewer than 15,000,000 inhabitants; and this great dependency, almost as large as France itself, can be governed, at an inconsiderable expense, with a little force of 3,000 troops, and a miniature fleet of a score of flat gunboats for the suppression of pirates on the border. The French have not hitherto turned their past position here to brilliant advantage, and it may be doubted whether they will do much better with their new opportunities. The acquisition, however of a new territory, both extensive and populous, is one of those glittering victories that dazzle politicians and strengthen Ministers, even if more often than not they weaken nations. France has escaped an arduous and unprofitable war, and China has only sacrificed a shadow. England, too, in some respects, at least, may well be satisfied, for Heaven only knows to what adventures she might have been driven—if a great war had broken out—in the way of sending ships to watch the interests of civilisation, and taking other measures

for picking a quarrel with France. It is true that England and the other nations have little or nothing to gain from the stipulations just made in favour of French trade. But if there is any reason for discomfort on our part, it is less from such considerations as that, than from the remoter consequences. The success of France in her dealings with China may easily tempt her Government to new enterprises that may be thought to be much more inconvenient to English commerce and English pride than the creation of the Indo-Chinese dependency.

"If the Sultan of Morocco reads telegrams," says a contemporary, "that of May 11, announcing the Treaty of Tientsin, must have given him a cold fit. The world is so closely bound together now, that the action of a Chinese Mandarin on the Yellow River has certainly shaken and may have destroyed an independent Musliman kingdom in North-West Africa." That is to say, the release from difficulties in Tonquin will leave M. Ferry free to make difficulties elsewhere, and especially in Morocco. About this country a word was spoken here last month, and the *Spectator* made light of us for thinking it worth talking about. "Suppose France," it said, "risking the permanent hostility of Spain, does add Morocco to Algeria and upset the peculiarly evil native government, what is it to us? Fortresses cannot bar ironclads from steaming past them, and except as regards free entrance to the Mediterranean, Morocco may, as far as England is concerned, as well be French as Spanish." *Except as regards free entrance to the Mediterranean!* But considering all the dangers that we are at this moment willing to run, in order to guard free exit from the Mediterranean at the other end, this is a very mighty and portentous "except." And it is the mismanaged doings at the eastern exit that have set France to work at the western entrance.

Cyprus led to Tunis: Egypt leads to Morocco. And our lips are sealed from remonstrance. "Had England put her foot down firmly," says one correspondent, "as she did after the Saida massacres when France wished to cross the Moorish frontier into Fighig, things would not have come to their present pass. Lord Lyons then informed the French Government that neither England nor Spain could look on quietly if such a step were taken, and it was not taken." But England cannot put her foot down firmly in a dozen places at once. The British Lion is not a centipede.

As it is, the pretexts of intervention in Morocco are the usual pleas for the interference of a Western with a Mohammedan Power. The people are, from a Western point of view, grossly misgoverned and oppressed. The prisons are pronounced to be a disgrace even to barbarians. The scandalous sale of slaves goes on in the streets. Finally, the country is rich in minerals, is blessed with the possibilities of illimitable wealth, only needs capital to open it up, and so forth, and so forth, in phrases that we all know by heart. The French representative (the counterpart of M. Roustan in Tunis) is now in Paris along with the Minister of the Sultan of Morocco, and the earthen and brazen pipkins are in close contact to one another by the Seine; it is sure to prove fatal to one of them.

Spain is more immediately interested in this particular phase of the matter than we are, but those take a superficial view of the forces of our time who do not see that the African question, though multifarious, is substantially one. Egypt, Tunis, Morocco, the Gold Coast, the Congo, are all episodes in the same great struggle. It may take years for the drama to unfold itself, or, on the other hand, heedless statesmanship may precipitate vast and formidable events before we know that they are upon us. Spain has

hitherto acted in accord with Great Britain, but there are reasons for thinking that she is now wavering in this traditional policy in respect of her interests in Northern Africa. It may be that Spain knows, first, that without England she is powerless, and next, that England with one arm tied up in Egypt, is unlikely to meddle in Morocco. M. Ferry again is, as every day more clearly shows, an astute and calculating statesman, and the stories are likely enough to be true that he thinks he has something to offer which Spain may reckon a compensation for French aggrandisement in Morocco.

However this may be, certainly one of the most important factors of the present European situation is the growing prospect of a stable Government and something like a coherent policy in France. For the first time since the fall of Thiers, if not since the ruin of the Empire, there is a Ministry that seems likely to last, and a chief who is capable of working carefully and steadfastly towards the attainment of his own objects. In Paris recent elections have given a victory to the Autonomists, or Radical advocates of local self-government in the capital, but the 400,000 electors of Paris are only one-thirtieth part of the 12,000,000 electors of France, and in the provinces it is the Opportunists of M. Ferry's school who have successfully held their ground against attack from Radicals on the one hand and Reactionists on the other. The session has begun, and the programme of the French Chamber is almost as crowded as our own. Reforms in criminal procedure, improvements in the university system, the budget of 1885, the settlement of Tonkin, and, above all, revision of the Constitution, all press for attention. The country is declared to be weary of the sacramental formulæ of parties, and to desire attention to its economic interests and requirements. So do all countries, but this never hinders politicians with the reins in their hands from pushing on whatever pieces of business may

seem most likely to serve their own notions of patriotic purpose. The new scheme of Constitutional revision proposes, among other things, that the irremovable Senators shall in future sit not for life but only for nine years; that such Senators shall be elected by Senate and Chamber together; that the financial rights of the Senate shall be modified; and, finally, that there shall no longer be public prayers at the opening of the legislature. The last will strike foreigners as a curious element in a plan of Constitutional revision. It recalls a singular fact. Before the census of 1881 it had been usual to class all persons who declined to state what was their religion, or who stated that they had no religion, as Roman Catholics. In 1881 persons "who declined to make any declaration of religious belief" were enumerated as such, with the result that there were upwards of seven and a half millions who registered themselves under that head, against twenty-nine millions of Roman Catholics. That more than one-fifth of the entire population should deliberately set themselves down as making no profession of religious belief is certainly a very astonishing and a highly momentous fact.

Compared with France, Spain is politically weak, and materially poor and without resource. France is not without intestine faction, but the Spanish monarchy is far less surely consolidated than the French Republic. The farce of an election of popular representatives to the Spanish Cortes was satisfactorily accomplished in the last week of last month. The Ministerialists number 295, against 93 of all other sections put together. The adherents of the Minister, Señor Canovas del Castillo, are thus seven times as many as the forty-two gentlemen who support Señor Sagasta. Nobody supposes that this represents anything like the proportion of opinion in the population, but the

electoral machinery places it in the power of the Government of the day, of whatever complexion it may be, to secure a Parliamentary majority. It was with this view that the king called the Conservative leader to power, instead of giving the right of a dissolution to either Sagasta or Posada Herrera. Besides taking care to make sure of a majority, the Reactionists sought to win a little capital by exaggerating or creating revolutionary movements in Navarre, Catalonia, and elsewhere. Arrests were made at Barcelona, two agents of Zorilla were discovered in possession of compromising papers at Cadiz, revolutionary risings were reported from the west, and the disastrous wreck of a bridge near Ciudad Real, on the Badajoz railway, was imputed to the deliberate action of political malignity. In our own country, or at least in Ireland, we know something of the trick of making every trumpety disorder a plea for coercion; and so in Spain these trivialities have been turned into arguments for dictatorships, military law, and all the other poisons that pass with Spanish partisans of most schools for salutary medicines.

Though only half a dozen years ago we were all ready to cut one another's throats or the throats of Turks or of Russians, in our passion for or against Bulgarians, that is a very bad reason why we should forget all about them until the revolution of time and things brings on another attack of the same fever. The obscure intrigues connected with the appointment of a new governor in Eastern Roumelia have ended in a mild victory for Russia. If things had been ripe for serious trouble, the incident would not have come to so unexciting an end. The question lay between the reappointment of Aleko, the new appointment of Rustem, and the choice of M. Crestovitch. Russia objected strongly to Aleko, nominally on the ground that he had gravely compromised the effi-

ciency of the militia by allowing the promotion of incompetent Bulgarian officers to the exclusion of their comrades of Russian nationality. Her candidate was M. Crestovitch, and the Porte, under the influence of considerations that have not been authentically divulged, has agreed. The assent of the Powers who signed the Berlin Treaty is technically necessary, but they have no interest in giving Russia trouble on a matter of this kind at this moment, though they would have preferred the maintenance of the *status quo*. The new Governor-General is of Bulgarian origin; he studied law in Paris, and has for the best part of his life been a member of the Tribunal of Commerce at Constantinople. Latterly he has been Secretary-General of Eastern Roumelia under Aleko. He is described as of a conciliatory disposition, as a Bulgarian patriot of the mildest type, and as having always endeavoured to restrain the heated

impatience of his countrymen. Though not brilliant, he has the merit of being of the nationality of those whose affairs he is now to administer, and under present circumstances his lack of brilliance is not likely to do harm.

In Roumania, they are preparing a revision of the electoral law, and showing that for once there are *vestigia retrorsum* from universal suffrage, by a project substituting for it a suffrage of three degrees. In Servia the Skuptchina is to hold a session at Nisch, instead of Belgrade, in order to be free from popular pressure in discussing questions so important as freedom of the press, and liberty of association and public meetings. Fifty years ago, how incredible it would have sounded that such themes should be exercising men's minds in lands then directly under the yoke of the Turk! Progress is not wholly and everywhere an illusion after all.

May 26.